

ORIENTING ARTHUR WALEY:  
JAPONISME, ORIENTALISM,  
AND THE  
CREATION OF JAPANESE LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

by

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## ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the principal Japanese translations of Arthur Waley (1889-1966): Japanese Poetry: The Uta (1919), The Nô Plays of Japan (1921), and The Tale of Genji (1925-33). These works have been overlooked as English literature of the British modern period, although Waley intended most of his translations to function as modern English literature. I include a short biography of Waley's formative years and maintain that aspects of his identity--Jewish, bisexual, and socialist--were important in the choice of his occupation and in the selection and interpretation of his texts.

I situate Japanese culture in the context of orientalism and Anglo-Japanese political relations. Japanese culture had a role to play in Anglo-Japanese imperialisms; this is demonstrated through an examination of the activities of the Japan Society of London, where Waley presented one of his first translations. The School of Oriental Studies in London also provided a platform for the translation and dissemination of Asian literature for the express purpose of promoting British imperial interests in the Far East. As an orientalist working through these institutions and the British Museum, Waley's positioning of himself as a Bloomsbury anti-imperialist was ambiguous. His texts, moreover, had a role to play in the presentation of Japan as an essentially aesthetic, 'feminine' nation.

There are few letters, and no diaries or working papers of Waley. I rely, therefore, on his published works, as well as the memoirs, letters and biographies of family members and friends, especially those of the Bloomsbury Group with which he was associated. I make extensive use of the Transactions of the Japan Society and historical records of the School of Oriental Studies, as well as critical reviews of Waley and other translators. Social and cultural histories of the period are used to construct key contexts: the Anglo-Jews, the Cambridge Fabians, British orientalism,

and English modernism between the wars. Since I maintain that homoeroticism in Japanese literature was one of its attractions for Waley, I also look to queer theory to assist in my reading of Waley's texts.

I conclude that The Tale of Genji enabled Waley to realize a personal ambition to write stories, and he produced a unique English novel that remains not only the most important modernist interpretation of Japanese culture between the wars, but a remarkable record of Edwardian-Bloomsbury language and aesthetic sensibility.



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## INTRODUCTION

Mr. Waley, what I should like to talk most about are your translations from Oriental languages. . . . And I want to talk about them as English poetry more than as translations. For it seems to me that, although they've been famous for over forty years, they've been neglected as English verse and as part of the revolution in English verse against iambic Tennysonian verse which took place just before the First World War.

("Arthur Waley in Conversation," BBC interview with Roy Fuller, 1963: 138)

Japanese culture was an important part of the modernist movement in the arts and literature that took place in Europe from the latter part of the nineteenth century to the early twentieth century. The collection and appreciation of Japanese arts and artifacts is usually referred to as japonisme, though I would say that the definition of japonisme can be extended to include the translation and appreciation of Japanese literature. Countless studies have been written on the influence of Japanese arts on Impressionism, Imagism, and on the poetry, drama and thoughts of the canonical poets W. B. Yeats and Ezra Pound, who presented themselves as leaders of the avant-garde 'discovery' of Japan. Less well-known in the field of English literature is a younger affiliate of the renowned Bloomsbury Group, the translator Arthur Waley (1889-1966), who, I will argue, was a key figure of the English modernist interpretation of Japanese culture and for this reason deserves the attention that he will be given here.

There is a common impression that Waley merely followed in the footsteps of Pound as a translator of Asian literature. This study will show that what Waley followed, and became an important part of, was a distinctly Anglo-European tradition of orientalism, and that he paid less devoted attention to Pound than Pound and his critics would like to believe. I will situate Waley within the context of an Anglo-Japanese socio-political relationship that had

been developing and changing since the mid-nineteenth century, and assess the general importance of Japanese culture to the British modernist 'enterprise' using Waley as a case study. But I will also argue that Waley is a creative writer who almost single-handedly created what the English-speaking public understood to be 'Japanese literature' during the modernist era. Japan before Waley was largely admired for its artifacts and pictorial arts, cultural forms that are less dependent upon language; the few Japanese translations that had appeared in English, including the Pound-Fenollosa version of Japanese No plays, were not received with much enthusiasm, as we will see.

It was Waley who introduced Japanese literature to a wide public, and at the same time his works were regarded by his contemporaries as English prose and poetry in their own right. Nevertheless, as Fuller suggested in the epigraph, Waley has received very little critical attention, either from the field of Japanese Studies or from the field of English Literature.<sup>1</sup> In Japanese Studies he is either venerated as the great deliverer of Japanese literature (e.g., Ivan Morris: "Without Waley's books it is unlikely that the classics of the Far East would have become such an important part of *our* heritage" ["Genius" 67; emphasis added]); or, conversely, he is dismissed because of the excessive liberality of his translations, which are regarded as being dangerously unreliable renditions of the 'sacred originals' (e.g., Seidensticker: "it should be worth a decade or so of someone's life to have a translation with a little less of the translator in it" ["A Decade" 131]). John Treat, professor of Japanese literature at the University of Washington, on the other hand, has recently stated that "Waley is the greatest

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<sup>1</sup> Twice in this interview with Fuller, Waley brought up the subject of his Japanese translations, but Fuller overlooked this and kept the conversation on Chinese poetry. In his memoir Spanner and Pen (1991), Fuller gives a brief account of his interview with Waley and says that "getting out of him early--any!--memories of Pound and Eliot was like the proverbial blood from a stone" (25). See also pp. 108-9, where Fuller adds, "...though anything he actually uttered--about metrics, about dining with Pound and Eliot--was absorbing."

translator of Asian literatures ever to have lived," but he did not follow up this acclaim with any actual study of Waley's translations (158).

Scholars of English literature, on the other hand, usually pass over Waley's Japanese translations as *Japanese* literature or merely translations. Thus Earl Miner, in his classic Japanese Tradition in British and North American Literature (1958), wrote, "Arthur Waley . . . was unquestionably one of the world's great translators, on the basis alone of his *Tale of Genji*. . . . Waley's *The Nô Plays of Japan*, are executed with both scholarship and delicacy and are, so to speak, the authoritative English texts" (136-7). Miner then devoted a chapter each to Yeats and Pound, while the above-mentioned praise was all the treatment that Waley received. Waley, in Miner's view, appeared to be neither Japanese nor 'British and North American,' but some vague indefinable quantity in between; a mere translator, a medium, not a Poet. "The Pound-Fenollosa version [of the No plays] is a poet's translation," Miner stated approvingly (137).

Other more powerful critics may have had a stronger influence on the erasure of Waley from the canon of English Literature. T. S. Eliot, probably the most important critic of English literature in the 20th century, is reported to have said that Waley was no poet (Robinson 61), while claiming that it was Pound who was "the inventor of Chinese poetry for our time" (qtd. in Kenner 195). This unbalanced view was sanctioned and spread by the Pound scholar Hugh Kenner in his The Pound Era (1971). There Kenner stated that "Waley was but one of the many who rushed in as word of the two-shilling pamphlet, *Câthay* got around" (192). If so (and it is not so), then Waley must have learned Chinese in less than a year, for his own privately printed Chinese Poems appeared the year after Cathay,

in 1916.<sup>2</sup> But the suggestion that Waley followed Pound's lead into Chinese poetry and No plays has been influential.

It is perhaps worth mentioning that F. R. Leavis, another profoundly influential critic in "fashioning English [Literature] into a serious discipline," paid Waley the compliment of referring to him nowhere in his writing (to my knowledge), nor did Waley publish anything in Leavis's Scrutiny (Eagleton 31). But this mutual 'ignorance' may have had more to do with Leavis's notorious hatred of the Bloomsbury Group, of which Waley was considered a member, than anything else.

It seems clear that Waley has suffered under the stigma of what Willis Barnstone has called "the shame of translation," and has been largely ignored as a result (9). As a translator, Waley has been seen as a type of scholar rather than a type of creative writer, as Miner's comment demonstrates. A negative attitude towards scholars was promoted by Pound himself who, writing to Harriet Monroe in 1914 about the Fenollosa manuscripts recently received from Mary Fenollosa, spoke of earlier attempts "to do Japanese in English" which he dismissed as "dull and ludicrous. That you needn't mention either as the poor scholars have done their bungling best" (Selected Letters 31). He may have publicly praised Waley's "excellent eye for subject matter" (qtd. in Carpenter 270), but in private he was contemptuous of the man he referred to as "the corpse-like Waley" (Pound/Lewis 83). It is ironic that this hostility to scholarship should stem from one of this century's most influential translators.

But even close friends of Waley made remarks which, though well-intentioned, tended to rank scholarship well below Art or Literature. Waley's

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<sup>2</sup> In an undated letter to Clifford Bax from the British Museum (i.e. written after 1913), Waley claimed that it was Bax's Twenty Chinese Poems (1910) that inspired him to study Asian languages: "I read it when it first came out and determined in consequence to learn Chinese, which I have done--and Japanese too, which has been such fun that I feel a debt of gratitude to you" (qtd. in Perlmutter 15).

good friend Harold Acton, for instance, commented that "scholars seldom write good prose let alone good poetry, and Arthur Waley was a scholar of painstaking precision. . . ." Great as he was, to Acton Waley was less a creator or an artist than a medium through which the creations of others were spoken, "as if the soul of, say, Po Chü-i or Lady Murasaki had entered into him and guided his pen" (More Memoirs 25-6). And so Waley becomes truly no more than a transparent window to the cultures and societies of the Far East.

A further reason for the lack of critical attention to Waley is that scholars have felt unqualified to assess his achievement without knowledge of the languages from which he translated. So Adrian Pinnington notes that there has been a "shortage of scholars with the appropriate interests and qualifications to undertake the discussion of a writer with Waley's peculiar and impressive talents, a problem endemic to the study of comparative literature" ("Bloomsbury Aesthetics" 42). Marian Ury's comment on Ruth Perlmutter's thesis, "Arthur Waley and his Place in the Modern Movement Between the Two Wars" (1971), was that Perlmutter was "hampered by insufficient knowledge of the languages from which [Waley] translated" ("Imaginary" 293).<sup>3</sup> The opinions of Pinnington and Ury are not invalid, but they are contingent upon an assumption that any discussion of a translator or a translation must involve close comparison with the texts from which he or she translated. Such 'close reading' projects may result in some interesting insights, but often at the expense of attention to the historical and ideological contexts which actually produced and surround the translations, and which were just as important in the production of the translation as any linguistic knowledge.

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<sup>3</sup> Perlmutter's dissertation is a survey of Waley's life and works. I don't believe her weakness lay in her ignorance of Chinese and Japanese, as Ury suggested, so much as the simple fact that she attempted to cover too much material even for a 400-page thesis; her study is also less critical than hagiographical.

The outcome of this critical neglect of Waley is the surprising truth that there is not a single book-length study of him in English, and just two dissertations; this, despite Waley's astonishing lifetime production of nearly forty books and over a hundred and thirty articles (see Johns' Bibliography). Of those dissertations, one is Perlmutter's, and the other is Chi-yiu Cheung's "Arthur Waley: Translator of Chinese Poetry" (1979). Cheung's thesis, as the title suggests, focuses on Chinese poetry, on which basis much of Waley's reputation rests. Cheung manages to arrive at the rather uninteresting conclusion that Waley did not translate Chinese poetry accurately, and that his knowledge of Chinese was not flawless. His thesis is a good example of the limits of the close reading method. A similar study was that of Wai-lim Yip on Pound's Cathay (1969), which compared some of Waley's translations with Pound's, and both with their source texts, offering his own highly idiosyncratic (though Kenner-influenced) evaluations of what literature is and what it is not, while avoiding what I believe is the more compelling historical question of why any Asian literature was translated at all. What was so interesting or important about the Far East at this particular time in history that so much attention was paid to its cultures? Why would anyone, like Waley, devote his entire life to the translation of classical Asian literature? What need had the market for his books? These are some of the questions that this dissertation will answer.

I will focus on Waley's principal "Japanese works," three texts that have never been analyzed in the context of early modern *English* culture. Waley's main translations from the Japanese were Japanese Poetry: The Uta (1919), The Nô Plays of Japan (1921), and The Tale of Genji (1925-33).<sup>4</sup> I have chosen these

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<sup>4</sup> There were other not unimportant texts, such as Zen Buddhism and Its Relation to Art (1922), The Pillow-Book of Sei Shônagon (1928), The Lady Who Loved Insects (1929), and "The Originality of Japanese Civilization" (1929), but other than Sei's Pillow Book, these were very short translations or articles, and of the Pillow Book, Waley translated only about one quarter. These texts (except for



texts for two reasons. First, these works best illustrate the development that took place in Waley as a translator-creative writer from 1919 to 1933. In a brief history of Japanese studies in Europe, Josef Kreiner remarks on the similarities in European "national approaches" to Japanese studies:

First of all, at the beginning of every attempt at interpretation, there arose the necessity to comprehend and to master the Japanese language. Dictionaries and grammars were among the first works to be compiled. Only then can one turn to reading and translating works of literature to get a thorough insight into history and thought. . . . (40)

Waley's Japanese translations mimic this development. His Japanese Poetry was his own personalized grammar, with only tentative steps towards literary translation. The Nô Plays went beyond philology into literature, with some history and criticism--both texts are scholarly and contain notes and bibliographies of primary and secondary sources. The Nô Plays, many of which re-enact scenes from famous works of Japanese literature such as the Heike Monogatari and the Genji Monogatari, also introduced Waley to a variety of texts and periods in Japanese history. Of these, Waley chose the Heian period and the Genji Monogatari. But his Tale of Genji (published in six volumes) abandons much of the scholarly apparatus and presents itself as a modern English novel. Only at the persistent request of readers did Waley, in introductions to later volumes, offer background information on the life and times of the author, Murasaki Shikibu.<sup>5</sup> Waley would always remain "a scholar of painstaking

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the short and unfinished tale, The Lady Who Loved Insects) will be referred to in relation to the 'principal' texts as outlined above.

<sup>5</sup> Volume one contains a brief preface of two pages giving possible dates of the *Tale's* composition. In volume two, Waley wrote, "several critics have asked to be told more about the writer of the *Tale of Genji*. . . . Reviewers have also asked for information concerning the state of literature in Japan at the time when the *Tale* was written" (vol. 2, The Sacred Tree 5). Waley then provided a more thorough introduction to these subjects in the introductions to volumes two and three.

precision," but at least in the Genji he saw himself more as a creative writer of literature than as a scholar.

Secondly, these three texts proceed through three different genres: from poetry to 'drama' to fiction, or narrative. Through this progression, I believe Waley fulfilled his ultimate personal aspiration, which was to be a writer of narrative, a storyteller. There is a common impression that Waley was primarily a scholar-poet. J. M. Cohen called Waley "an interpretative artist who is at the same time both poet and scholar" (30). Roy Fuller asked Waley, "I wonder how far your great work of translation has fulfilled your own poetic talents. I gather that you started thinking of yourself as a poet at a very early age." Perhaps surprisingly, Waley replied, "I really thought of myself writing stories. A great deal of my youth was occupied in writing stories. I did write poems very early, but I didn't attach much importance to them" ("A.W. in Conversation" 150-1). Nor did Waley attach much importance to his English versions of Japanese poems, for reasons I will explore in chapter three. His Nô Plays was a more successful book than his Japanese Poetry (though No playtexts were regarded as a type of poetry), but his greatest success in translating Japanese literature was undoubtedly The Tale of Genji, when a lifetime preoccupation with "writing stories" came to fruition.<sup>6</sup>

As indicated above, I will not be comparing Waley's translations with their source texts. As Edward Said has written, "the things to look at are style, figures of speech, setting, narrative devices, historical and cultural circumstances, *not*

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<sup>6</sup> It is true that Waley also revealed a "lifelong preoccupation with [Chinese] poetry," as David Hawkes wrote (46), but a glance at Waley's Chinese translations shows a similar pattern. He began with poetry and moved to 'creative literary biography' and other prose texts, including Chinese philosophy and the abridged translation of the Chinese novel Monkey (1942). Most of his post-1930s books of Chinese poetry, such as Select Chinese Verses (1934, with Herbert Giles), Translations from the Chinese (1941) and Chinese Poems (1946) were also collections of earlier translations taken from A Hundred and Seventy Chinese Poems (1918) and More Translations from the Chinese (1919).

the correctness of the representation nor its fidelity to some great original" (Orientalism 21). Of these categories, I am most interested in Waley's style, and in the historical and cultural circumstances *surrounding* his translations from the Japanese, what Tejaswini Niranjana calls the "outwork" of a translation (13). This outwork includes such texts as prefaces and introductions, bibliographies, critical reviews and footnotes, as well as the translations themselves. We may find in this outwork many of the presumptions of the translator and his or her intended audience, the reasons for translating, and the texts and translations to which he or she responded. Critical reviews in particular reveal much about contemporary attitudes and assumptions; it is no coincidence that reviews may sound 'natural' as they are near to us in time, but increasingly strange and strangely fascinating as they lie further in the past. They are documents of great value as social and cultural history. I have been inspired here by the example of Reina Lewis who states in her Gendering Orientalism (1996), "I am going to use contemporary criticism as indicators of the cultural codes and contemporary meanings ascribed to my 'primary' texts. As such, reviews constitute part of the social reality of the texts, contributing to how they were read and, I will argue, to how they were produced" (31). It is also important to note the ideological position of the journals where these reviews appeared, since the positive or negative reception of a text often has more to do with ideology than with any value inherent in the text under review. The fact that Waley published articles and translations most frequently in the New Statesman, for instance, reveals much about his politics and a peculiar contemporary view of Japan in Britain, as we will see.

Before discussing Waley immediately, it will be helpful to provide some background to the Western reception of Japanese culture and political relations between Britain and Japan. Chapter one of this study is an overview of

japonisme in the pre-Waley period from approximately the 1880s to 1910. I will show that japonisme was no mere passing fad of the period, but a movement that was produced by imperialism and in turn supported and served Anglo-Japanese imperialisms. A review of the establishment and activities of the Japan Society of London--where Waley presented one of his first translations--demonstrates that Japanese culture had a definite role to play in imperial politics. This period is also critically important because the interest of post-First World War writers is inextricably linked to nineteenth century japonisme and the Aesthetic Movement, notably through the lasting influence of Oscar Wilde, a hero of the Bloomsbury Group with which Waley was affiliated. Finally, the chapter introduces one of the strongest recurring images of Japan which undoubtedly had a powerful influence on Waley's generation and which, except for the eclipse of the 1930s and '40s, persists to this day: Japan as a land of artists and art lovers, the aesthetic nation par excellence, celebrated as such by the great Aesthete himself, Oscar Wilde.

Chapter two is a biographical sketch of Waley which I feel is necessary to establish his social and intellectual background and relations, since very little is known about him. I want to draw attention here to three aspects of Waley's identity that I believe influenced his scholarship--from the initial decision to become an orientalist to the selection of texts and the formation of his critical views: his Jewish background, his tendency towards homosexuality or bisexuality, and his socialism.<sup>7</sup> By "tendency" I mean that Waley had and expressed a certain homosexual desire, but whether this desire was realized in actual physical relationships with men is open to question. These three aspects of

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<sup>7</sup> I do not mean to suggest that the identity of Waley can be reduced to these three aspects; I merely wish to focus on them here because there are intriguing and important connections at this time in history between socialism and Japan, between Jewishness and orientalism, and between homosexuality and Japan and/or the orient.

Waley's identity lead him towards a position of sympathy or empathy with the 'other' in English society, and throughout his life and career affected his choices.

Readers of this short biography may wonder that I have not investigated Waley's life in greater detail. Unfortunately, few letters, and no working papers or diaries of Waley appear to have survived. Waley's nephew, Daniel Waley, in a personal communication, said that "Arthur wrote letters reluctantly and his communications were brief. I also doubt whether he ever kept letters. And working papers were, I suspect, thrown away when he had finished with them; drafts and proofs were probably thrown away when a book was published and he moved on to another." They were indeed thrown away, for in May 1963, some of Arthur and Beryl de Zoete's personal belongings and papers were accidentally 'removed' from Arthur's temporary flat in Great James Street by some workers who were instructed to clear the space for a new tenant (Waley was about to move to his new home in Highgate). Waley was later told by police that the papers probably ended up at a garbage dump. A commentary in the Times Literary Supplement, in response to Ivan Morris' request in 1967 for Waley material, explained the case and wrote as follows:

The loss of this mass of material--letters, manuscripts, private diaries, notes, photographs, &c. (and Mrs. Waley thinks it likely that further material was removed on other occasions)--was a cause of great personal distress to Dr. Waley throughout his last years: he even asked his wife never to refer to it again in his lifetime. It was also an inestimable loss to scholars in many fields, for it must have contained much of interest not only to Sinologues, Japanologues and bibliographers but also to any historian of Bloomsbury, or to biographers of the many literary figures whom Waley knew and

corresponded with for more than half a century, or of course to any biographer of Waley himself. (TLS 2 Nov. 1967: 1043)

If indeed the materials had been stolen, as Waley's wife, Alison Waley,<sup>8</sup> charged (see also A Half of Two Lives 263-5), it seems likely that by now they would have turned up, since such a cache would have been of significant financial value as well as literary interest. Deliberate or accidental, the loss of Waley's papers was great, and I have only been able to write this chapter using the memoirs, letters and biographies of Waley's acquaintances, such as the memoir of his sister-in-law, Margaret H. Waley.

Chapter three turns from personal background to Waley's first translation from the Japanese. I shall demonstrate that Waley's Japanese Poetry: The Uta was more of a grammar of the Japanese language than a poetic translation, in spite of its critical reception as Japanese poetry in English. I argue that this book was designed, rather, as an educational tool for a new field of Japanese Studies in England that was inaugurated with the opening of SOAS in 1917.<sup>9</sup> By encouraging his readers--students and scholars--to undertake the 'serious' academic study of Japanese literature, Waley was also attempting to distance himself from the romantic myth of Japan as a 'land of lyricism.' He was also establishing himself as *the* interpreter of Japan for English modernism.

Certainly Waley was dissatisfied with Pound and Yeats's interpretation of the Japanese No drama (though he blamed Fenollosa for their improper understanding). Chapter four examines Waley's Nô Plays of Japan, which had several distinct purposes. One aim was to correct some of the negative views on the No of Waley's academic predecessors, and I will, therefore, review the critical

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<sup>8</sup> Arthur Waley married Alison Robinson 26 May 1966, a month before his death on 27 June.

<sup>9</sup> The University of London School of Oriental Studies was opened on the 18th of January 1917. The name was later changed to the London School of Oriental and African Studies, now commonly known as SOAS.

reception of the No by British academics and observers before Waley. Another purpose was to provide ammunition for modernism in its battle against realism; however, Waley set himself against the elitist modernism of Yeats and Pound who were consciously creating an unpopular literature for a chosen few. Waley, on the other hand, had the equally idealistic and improbable notion that the No was popular literature and would be of interest to a popular audience searching for the 'soul of Japan.' The No, like kabuki, was an exclusively male theatrical form that had a close association with a long tradition of homosexuality in Japan. Waley, I argue, was also attracted to the homoeroticism of the No, and drew attention to it accordingly in his Nô Plays.

Waley also discovered homoeroticism in the 11th century Genji Monogatari. His Tale of Genji was unquestionably his most significant and successful translation from the Japanese. I argue in chapter five that Waley's Tale of Genji is an English novel in its own right, a romantic escape in prose from the aftershock of war into an aestheticized realm of sensitive, effeminate manners and highly cultivated aesthetic tastes, a sort of catalogue in prose of japanoiseries, described by one recent critic as "Bloomsbury propaganda for the cult of beauty" (Ury, Rev. of Murasaki's Genji 531). The critical reception in the West of the Genji in the first half of this chapter, including translations that appeared before and after Waley, demonstrates that Waley's Genji was read as a uniquely interwar English novel, appealing to a Western nostalgia for some Golden Age. Waley's Genji was especially celebrated for its prose style, so in part two of this chapter I attempt to identify the special features of Waley's style and set it in the context of contemporary debates on appropriate literary language. The character Genji, partly a manifestation of Waley's style, is also described here as a unique interwar hero who could not have existed before 1914, so lacking was he in the pre-war requirements of British masculinity. Finally, I question Waley's

construction of the Japanese Heian period as one of "rampant aestheticism," a perspective that seems more in line with Waley's own tastes and the tastes of the '20s in England than with historical 'reality.'

The final chapter, the conclusion, explains why Waley translated almost no Japanese literature after the Genji, turning his attention as he did almost exclusively to Chinese works. I will show that Waley, contrary to some views, was not a "hermit Japanologist" unconcerned with modern Asia. This chapter is a general investigation of British attitudes towards China and Japan in the 1930s and 40s in the light of contemporary political developments. New literary movements such as 'the Auden group' were distinctly socialist, sympathizing with anti-fascism in Spain, communism in China, and deploring Japan's invasion of Manchuria. The appreciation and/or promotion of Japanese culture was suddenly out of fashion in the West, and Waley abandoned Japan and chose China more as a political necessity than as a literary choice. By doing so he was also able to remain a successful and popular translator.

No study of an orientalist and orientalism can bypass Edward Said's provocative book, Orientalism (1978). Although Japan and China were not really part of 'Said's' orient, which we call now the Middle East, many of his key arguments about Europe and 'his orient' hold true for East Asia as well. There was and still is a tendency among Western (and Japanese) observers to see all of Asia, including Japan, as one organic whole, opposed to an essential and unified 'West.' 'East is East, and West is West' has become such a standard cliché of the English language that it is often stated as proverbial truth, without any understanding of the historical moment which produced it.<sup>10</sup> There has also been some tendency among Japanese and Western scholars to portray the

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<sup>10</sup> The phrase comes from Kipling's poem, "The Ballad of East and West," 1889.



Japanese people as typically 'oriental': irrational, childlike, emotional and spiritual as opposed to Western people who are rational, mature and logical. Yet in many important ways, Japan challenges these facile binomial categories. Japan has been since the early twentieth century a 'first-world Western' power, challenging Europe and the United States in science, industry, finance and, until 1945, in the colonization of other countries. Japan has been treated since 1853 with condescension, racism, and stereotyping, but Japan has also been admired and respected by many Western observers as an equal, even superior, civilization. As Britain's military ally from 1902-1921, Japan was regarded as an equally legitimate imperial power, not to be treated offhandedly. As Subaltern Studies have shown, the countries of Asia cannot be simply regarded as passive 'oriental' nations dominated and manipulated by an 'aggressive' imperialist West, as in Said's framework (see Guha and Spivak). In the case of Japan, we must bear in mind the dialogical nature of Anglo-Japanese imperialism, which is pronounced in the period we are studying and should become clear in the first chapter. I am not going to put terms like Western, European, Eastern, or We in quotation marks each time I use them; however, I am sensitive in this study to the use of such essentializing binomial categories, and I will be the first to state that "Western" never includes everyone in the West, just as I do not believe in such a thing as "the Japanese."

One more point about Said needs to be made. In Orientalism, Said scoffed at the likes of "Pound, Eliot, Yeats, Arthur Waley, Fenollosa, Paul Claudel . . . Victor Ségalen, and others" who paid homage to "'the wisdom of the East'" (252). There is some truth to the observation that Waley devoted a good part of his career to the study and translation of Chinese 'wisdom,' or philosophy, but the comment really represents a complete ignorance on Said's part of Waley's scholarship. Waley can be associated with Yeats, Pound, and Eliot as a modernist

writer with an enthusiasm for Asian cultures, but in terms of scholarship there can be no comparison; the others dabbled in 'orientalia' and knew no Asian languages, while Waley's understanding of Asian (and European) languages and cultures was wide and deep. His oeuvre is intimidating in its enormity and breadth. Waley was also one of the first orientalists to challenge the very narrow Western intellectual assumptions that only half a century later Said attacked; Waley represents a significant advance over pre-war orientalists with his calm analytical approach and his keen awareness of the limitations of Western knowledge. We will not overlook Waley's shortcomings here, but some defence of the little reputation that has remained also seems warranted.

My own 'discovery' of Waley was made in 1990 while I was engaged in research on my Master's thesis on Yeats and Japan.<sup>11</sup> At the time I was trying to show that Yeats had constructed a Japan of his own imagination; that this was so only became clear to me after living in Japan for some years. Waley was one of Yeats's primary sources on Japan, but in the course of this research, I found that very little had been written about Waley, who I now understand was a far more important English writer than Yeats or Pound where Japan is concerned. This dissertation is not intended to be the definitive study of Arthur Waley, but hopefully will initiate discussion and encourage further research on Waley and other neglected subjects; a major study of Waley and China, for instance, remains to be undertaken.

Setting out on this project in 1993, I was aware that there was another literary figure and scholar of Asia who had been largely forgotten, Waley's boss and friend at the British Museum, Laurence Binyon. Fortunately, I chose Waley over Binyon as a subject, for John Hatcher has recently published a fine critical biography of Binyon (1995) in which he writes, "for decades now countless books

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<sup>11</sup> "Yeats's Japan: More Myth than Reality." M.A. Thesis. McGill University, 1991.

and articles have sieved ever-finer minutiae from the lives and works of Yeats, Pound, Eliot, and Bloomsbury figures, while Binyon's generation has languished . . ." (vii). Waley was one of those Bloomsbury figures, and though he was not of Binyon's generation, Hatcher's point holds equally true for Waley, scholar, poet, novel writer, and primary interpreter of Japan and China to the English-speaking world between the two great world wars of the twentieth century.

**Note:** All Japanese names are given family name last, as in English, and are presented as they have appeared in print, with no diacritical marks added or removed. Exceptions to this rule are the names of characters from Waley's Tale of Genji (e.g., Tô no Chûjô; To no Chujo in Waley), and 'Kenchio Suyematz,' whose name I have transcribed in its modern form, Kenchô Suematsu. Note that some famous Japanese personages are traditionally referred to by their given names (e.g., Zeami Motokiyo is referred to as Zeami).

## CHAPTER ONE

### The Institutionalization of Japonisme in Britain: from Aestheticism towards Modernism

The early modern period in Britain, from about 1880 to 1910, witnessed a transition in culture from Aestheticism to Modernism at the same time as it observed the rapid emergence of Japan as a modern state, an empire, forming its closest political and economic ties with the empire of Britain. In this chapter I shall examine the role that Japanese culture had to play in these transformations, and the role of the Japan Society of London in particular, for it is my conviction that "all the silly Japanophilia of the period," as Bruce Cumings calls it (100), did not merely happen haphazardly. Japan's mid-nineteenth century 'discovery' by the West was neither coincidental nor unexpected, but emerged out of a complex series of historical events.

The sudden awareness of Japan in the Western mind was a result of the West's political and economic interests in the Far East, interests that resulted in the forced opening of Japan to trade after almost two hundred and fifty years of relative isolation. That Japanese culture was thought about, collected, displayed and studied in Western parlors, museums, and academies, was a direct consequence of imperialism; indeed, it would not be too much to say that imperialism produced a 'cult of Japan' in the early modern period. But I am also asking--in what I am calling the institutionalization of japonisme--to what extent did japonisme support or serve the cause of imperialism; to what use were put the celebrated arts of Japan? This chapter also provides a background to the Western study of Japanese culture in the Victorian period before the arrival of Arthur Waley, and introduces themes that will arise later in this study.

Aestheticism, as defined by the OED, is "the philosophy of the beautiful, especially in art." According to Oscar Wilde, the great apostle of Aestheticism, however, it was not so much the contemplation of existing forms of beauty as "the search after the signs of the beautiful," for it was generally conceded that modern Western civilization, particularly England, was an ugly, corrupt, and decaying thing (Interviews 1: 37). This search led to the creation, or revival, of the myth of a golden European past, what Raymond Williams in The Country and the City (1973) called the "organic society" (11), which has always already gone, but it seemed to be even more amply rewarded by the 'discovery' in 1853 of Japan and the subsequent revelation of its art. There, in the Far East, was a half-legendary civilization with a rich and ancient culture that was apparently closed off from Western science and industrialism.

Japanese art was an intrinsic part of the Aesthetic Movement in the arts. "The Aesthetes had palpitations before anything Japanese," wrote an early biographer of J. M. Whistler, but the attraction to Japanese art and objets d'art was not just an appreciation of art for art's sake (Laver 164). Japonisme was also an idealization or romanticization of the perceived conditions under which that art had been produced. Knowing little in the nineteenth century of the actual conditions of life in Japan, and even deliberately ignoring 'reality' in favor of some elusive exotic ideal, early admirers of Japanese art tried to interpret and explain Japanese civilization on the basis of a very limited number of texts, largely artifacts and pictorial arts, cultural forms that are less tied to language. Knowledge in the West about Japan, as Elisa Evett explains, then consisted of

long-standing myth, often reinforced by biased travellers' reports but nurtured also by an escapist longing for the opposite of advanced, complex-Western civilization [and it] perpetuated a vision of the Japanese as a simple, innocent, primitive people living in blissful

harmony with gentle benign nature. The Japanese pictorial images of nature seemed in turn to confirm this picture, and an intricate set of intertwined observations and explanations of Japanese art and the people who created it produced a general view that the Japanese civilization had been arrested in permanent infancy--Unlike the West, it had not experienced progressive development and had remained fixed in its original state. (xiii)

Japanese art and the apparent simple and pure conditions that had produced it were admired, but that admiration was contingent upon an unshakeable Victorian confidence in the ultimate superiority of Western art and civilization. So J. J. Jarves wrote in 1876 of the "marvel" that "nearly forty millions of semi-barbarous heathens--as our school books have taught us to view the Japanese--could have attained to such high degrees of taste and skill" (15). Sir Rutherford Alcock--first British Minister to Japan and the man who had been responsible for procuring Japanese art for the London International Exhibition of 1862--said in 1878 that "the Japanese as a nation have shown how thousands of the artisan and working classes in succeeding ages, with no higher culture than Nature affords," have given Japan, "a great and enviable pre-eminence throughout the civilized world" (292). William Burges, architect and devotee of medievalism and one of the first English collectors of Japanese prints, said of the Japanese Court at the Exhibition that "these hitherto unknown barbarians appear to know all that the middle ages knew but in some respects are beyond them and us as well" (qtd. in Aslin 81). There were Western "artists" and Japanese "artisans." There was great Western art, "above the comprehension of the multitude," said Jarves, and there were Japanese art[ifact]s "which all can appreciate and enjoy" (15). Victorian observations of Japan and its art clearly reveal more about the Victorians and their attitudes than they do about anything Japanese.

Surprisingly, "the multitude" seemed to appreciate and enjoy Japanese things. The effect of the London International Exhibition of 1862 followed by the Paris Exhibition of 1867, as well as other such exhibitions in America was to create, said the Liberal MP and member of the Japan Society, Sir Edward Reed, in 1880, "so great a further demand for their (Japanese) products that it was not easy to sustain a proportionate supply" (263). Everywhere Japanese silks, bronzes, embroideries, art, pottery, lacquer-ware, carved wood and ivory, were displayed in shop windows. Large consignments of Japanese goods arrived regularly in the European ports. "In twenty years," bemoaned Sadakichi Hartmann in 1904, "these 'promoters' almost drained Japan, taking away all they could lay their hands on . . ." (158). Actually, it was to the delight of Japanese manufacturers and the Meiji government who were the principal promoters. In the 1870s and '80s in England there were also provincial exhibitions of Japanese art, Japanese balls, a Japanese village set up briefly in Knightsbridge, Japanese furniture, Japanese books and, of course, Gilbert and Sullivan's immensely popular The Mikado (1885) which, among other things, acknowledged the demand in London for almost anything Japanese; it ran continuously in London for almost two years for a total of 672 performances.

Of course, the effects of these exhibitions were not only cultural or economic. As P. F. Kornicki notes, "recent work on the Great Exhibitions has done much to undermine the mythologies of international peace and progress that they left behind" ("Public Display" 167). Located in the age of imperialism and first shaped almost exclusively by Britain and France, the exhibitions were competitive affairs that functioned as signifiers of national identity, affirming the power and authority of the empire-nation and testifying to Western supremacy and world domination. There before, say, a British public in the imperial capital in 1862, was the triumphal display of art, artifacts and curiosities

from the furthest reaches of the colonized globe. Japan was not colonized, but certainly had fallen into the vast sphere of British hegemony, as we will observe shortly.

Wilde's discussions of Japanese art helped to popularize japonisme and connect it inevitably with the Aesthetic Movement (and with a homosexual subculture, especially after Wilde's trial). His lecture in the United States in 1882 on "The English Renaissance of Art" revealed the "secret" of "the influence which Eastern art is having on us in Europe," and the contemporary "fascination of all Japanese work." While praising Japanese art, he criticized the Western intellectual spirit for being unreceptive to the sensuous element of art, for "laying on art the intolerable burden of its own intellectual doubts," while the East had always "kept true to art's primary and pictorial conditions" (Collected Works 260-1). He told one reporter in Atlanta that after California his next stop would be Japan where he intended to study "the method and the education of their ordinary artisans and to try to understand how it is that every ordinary Japanese workman has got this perfectly masterful power of design which are characteristics of their work" (Interviews 1: 96).

While in Japan, Wilde declared that he would "pass [his] youth, sitting under an almond tree in white blossom, drinking amber tea out of a blue cup, and looking at a landscape without perspective" (Letters 120). Presumably he would be right at home in the land where, he declared, "the worship of the lily is the foundation of religion" (Interviews 1: 99). Of course, Wilde in America was really exhibiting himself, but in a famous work, "The Decay of Lying" (1889), he indicated an awareness of the extent to which Japan had become "the strongest external design influence in England from the mid-sixties until the end of the century" (Aslin 96). "If you desire to see a Japanese effect," argues "Vivian,"



you will not behave like a tourist and go to Tokio. On the contrary, you will stay at home, and steep yourself in the work of certain Japanese artists, and then, when you have absorbed the spirit of their style, and caught the imaginative manner of their vision, you will go some afternoon and sit in the Park or stroll down Picadilly, and if you cannot see an absolutely Japanese effect there, you will not see it anywhere.

(Works 927)

Wilde clearly recognized here that Japanese art was not an accurate mirror of Japanese reality but a new standard for the measure of Western aesthetic sensibility. With the statement, "the whole of Japan is a pure invention. There is no such country, there are no such people" (Works 927), he had proceeded "from the modest claim that Japan as it is depicted in art does not actually exist outside of it to the bolder announcement that Japan only exists there," as Jeffrey Nunokawa says (54). The "Japanese effect," in other words, was one that could only be seen in Western museums, or in import shops selling paintings, fans, ukiyoe, and other 'orientalia.'

Japan, in effect, had become a Western museum catering to Aesthetes 'in search of signs of the beautiful,' or to others in search of an imagined pre-industrial European paradise. Kipling even suggested in 1900 that Japan should be paid to "simply [sit] still and [go] on making beautiful things. . . . It would pay us to put the whole Empire in a glass case and mark it *Hors Concours*, Exhibit A" (qtd. in Nunokawa 52). The notion of "payment" indicates that Japan was thought of in economic as well as aesthetic terms, and the passage carries with it unmistakably racist undertones. Evidently what mattered to these observers was not Japan so much as Japan's *use to* the British empire, to paraphrase Said (115).

Yet Wilde would have insisted that Japanese art was not for the 'uncomprehending multitude' to appreciate and enjoy. True appreciation was

reserved for only the most sophisticated Western sensibilities. In The Picture of Dorian Grey (1890), for instance, Lord Henry Wotton's appreciation of Japanese things is meant to signify his impeccably fine, avant-garde taste. Here he is in his London studio on the first page of the novel:

From the corner of the divan of Persian saddle-bags on which he was lying, smoking, as was his custom, innumerable cigarettes, Lord Henry Wotton could just catch the gleam of the honey-sweet and honey-coloured blossoms of a laburnum, whose tremulous branches seemed hardly able to bear the burden of a beauty so flame-like as theirs; and now and then the fantastic shadows of birds in flight flitted across the long tussore-silk curtains that were stretched in front of the huge window, producing a momentary Japanese effect, and making him think of those pallid jade-faced painters of Tokio who, through the medium of an art that is necessarily immobile, seek to convey the sense of swiftness and motion. The sullen murmur of the bees shouldering their way through the long unmown grass, or circling with monotonous insistence round the dusty gilt horns of the straggling woodbine, seemed to make the stillness more oppressive. The dim roar of London was like the bourdon note of a distant organ.

(Works 18)

One wonders to which "pallid jade-faced painters of Tokio" Wilde was referring, or whether the painters themselves were not also seen as only art imagery.

Lord Henry's world is an oasis of Asian art seemingly unaffected by industrialism or even time, like an imaginary, aestheticized Japan. The oasis is surrounded, however, by the "dim roar of London," that heart of empire, the very source and sustenance of the exotic enclave, hailed by H. G. Wells as "the centre of civilization, the heart of the world," though condemned more

caustically by Conrad as a "monstrous town"; "a cruel devourer of the world's light." It is interesting to observe how smoothly and gracefully Japan has been incorporated into a canvas of orientalism that includes Persian saddle-bags and probably Indian or Chinese tussore-silk curtains. Lord Henry's "heavy opium-tainted" cigarettes are also deeply implicated in British colonial activities in the East, and though the opium was probably grown in Turkey, the word "opium" became powerfully associated with British Far Eastern connections since the 'opium wars' with China in 1839-42 and 1856-8.<sup>12</sup>

Aestheticism deified beauty as the ultimate experience of life, and art as a superior reality to nature or any human activity, with its own special laws and values. The exemption of art from the 'mundane' laws and values of human society was performed because Aesthetes saw art, and themselves, as necessarily and naturally at odds with society. Culture ought not to mix with politics or economics because it was in another, superior, class. 'Poetic truth,' moreover, was preferable to 'scientific truth' as it was born of divine imagination rather than of the lesser human faculties of reason and observation. Yet while Aestheticism divorced itself from society and its received standards of value to take up new residence in the ivory tower, Aesthetes like Wilde, and later many of the Bloomsbury figures such as the Woolfs, Roger Fry and Waley, held to the romantic conviction that art should play a leading role in the improvement of society; that artists were, as Shelley said, society's unacknowledged legislators. The 'alienated artist' illusion was precisely that, and in practice culture has

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<sup>12</sup> At the time of publication of Dorian Grey, 80% of opium used in England derived from Turkey while only 2% came from India. The British East India Company, however, controlled the Indian opium plantations which exported opium to China. The best source on this subject is Virginia Berridge, Opium and the People. Rev. ed. London: Free Association, 1999. A more literary analysis of opium use in Britain can be found in Barry Milligan, Pleasures and Pains: Opium and the Orient in Nineteenth-Century British Culture. London: UP of Virginia, 1995.

everything to do with politics, economics, and even science, law and industry; it was, and has always been, inseparable from them, as Wilde was later to learn.

To illustrate this point in some detail I want to look at the development of an institution that was particularly instrumental in formalizing, systematizing, or "institutionalizing" the diverse and irregular Victorian phenomena of japonisme. The Japan Society of London was founded in 1892 ostensibly for (to quote the Rules), "the promotion of mutual understanding and good feeling between the British and Japanese peoples, and the encouragement of the study of the Japanese Language, Literature, History, and Folklore, of the Social Life and Economic Condition of the Japanese People, Past and Present, and of Japanese matters generally" (Trans. 37: xiv). What the early Japan Society had in common with Aestheticism was more than might be supposed. There was above all the admiration, at times adulation, of their members for Japanese art and art crafts; of all possible "Japanese matters" the large part of the early essays in the Transactions deal with visual arts and were written primarily by English collectors. Ukiyoe were cheap, but even traditional Japanese art treasures had become readily available as westernization swept Meiji Japan and "monasteries and religious institutions, financially hard pressed, threw open their ancient treasures and tried to dispose of their paintings and sculpture" (Grilli 120-1). Japan, in its near-colonial encounter with the West, was the latest country to take its place in Britain's "universal survey museum" (the phrase is Carol Duncan and Alan Wallach's).

The Japan Society and the Aesthetic Movement may not have had any written rules or qualifications for membership, but they were clearly societies of the elite. Because they admired the same culture and moved in the same select social circles, Aesthetes and members of the Japan Society at times found

themselves at the same social gatherings, such as the "Japanese Night" dinner of "The Sette of Odd Volumes" reported in The Daily Graphic on 6 June 1892:

Many of those present were apparently members of the Japan Society, including Messrs Diosy, Piggott and Huish. In response to a toast, the Japanese naval attaché responded 'in his own tongue'. Oscar Wilde, who was a guest, 'was called upon to respond for himself, an opportunity of which he made the most, prefacing his remarks by assuring the Sette that it was the one subject that had engrossed his attention from his earliest recollection'. *The Graphic* recorded that 'The menu of the evening, presented by brother Huish, suggested the gathering of a kindred society in Japan, discussing an apology for English art!' (qtd. in Cortazzi 5)

Diosy, Piggott and Huish were members of the first council of the Society, Piggott the vice-chairman, Diosy an honorary secretary. Piggott had also been the Legal Adviser to the newly-formed Japanese cabinet. The President of the Society was always the chief representative of the Japanese government in England, usually the ambassador. Honorary members included the scholars W. G. Aston, translator of the Tosa Nikki (1876) and the Nihongi (1896), author of A History of Japanese Literature (1899) and Shintô, the Way of the Gods (1905), as well as several important early grammars of the Japanese language; Captain F. Brinkley, Tokyo correspondent for the Times until 1912, whose 12-volume history of China and Japan would later fascinate Pound and Yeats; Basil Hall Chamberlain, professor of Japanese at the University of Tokyo and author of the acclaimed Things Japanese (1890); John Gubbins, then Japanese secretary to the British Legation at Tokyo, later appointed to a lectureship in Japanese at Oxford which he held from 1909 to 1912; Kakuzo Okakura, Principal of the Tokyo College of Fine Arts, ex-disciple of Ernest Fenollosa, and author of The Book of Tea (1906),

as well as The Ideals of the East (1903) and The Awakening of Japan (1904), all influential texts promoting the vision of a pan-Asiatic unity. Okakura later became Fenollosa's successor as curator of the Asian collection at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts and exhibited considerable influence over American art historians such as Langdon Warner (Kramer 176).<sup>13</sup> There was also Lieutenant Julien Viaud of the French Navy, better known to posterity as Pierre Loti, author of Madame Chrysanthème, one of the most influential texts promoting the exotic, feminine image of Japan in the West.

The Japan Society professed itself to be, like the Aesthetes, apolitical. Its president in 1941, Mamoru Shigematsu, recounting "Fifty Years of the Japan Society," maintained that the Society had carefully steered clear of controversial politics, and had "faithfully and steadfastly" adhered to the Rules; yet the Japan Society was surely not only a cultural or academic forum but a forum for the all-important 'informal' meetings of government representatives and heads of state of Britain and Japan (Trans. 37: xiv). The Society was privately funded but received regular and generous 'gifts' from the Japanese Emperor as well as other Japanese 'friends' of the Society; its first British royal patron was signed on in 1913, by which time, as we will see, Britain was equally in need of Japan's friendship.

A perusal of the attendants at dinners and meetings of the Society, published in the Transactions and Proceedings, indicates that considerably more was going on in the early decades than the appreciation of ukiyo or

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<sup>13</sup> Ideals of the East was written after Okakura's visit to India in 1901-2, where he met Swami Vivekananda and the poet-prophet, Rabindranath Tagore. Tagore would later tell a Japanese audience that it was Okakura from whom "we first came to know there was such a thing as an Asiatic mind" (qtd. in Hay 38-9). Tagore was also profoundly affected by G. Lowes Dickinson's Letters from John Chinaman (1901), an anti-imperialist essay which criticized British treatment of China during the Boxer 'rebellion' and argued "the moral superiority of Chinese over Western civilization" (Hay 34). In his review of this book, Tagore wrote "I have seen from it that there is a deep and vast unity among the various peoples of Asia" (qtd. in Hay 34). Dickinson was one of Waley's mentors at Cambridge (see chapter two, pp. 47-8).

"Mountaineering in Japan." At the annual dinner of 1898 is the First Lord of the British Admiralty, Earl Spencer (Japan's naval fleet and mercantile marine were built in British yards); in 1902 is Count Masayoshi Matsukata, former prime minister and finance minister, now in Britain on a mission to attract foreign capital to Japan for the express purpose of militarization (Nish, Alliance 254). Accompanying Diosy on a visit to Portsmouth following a garden party given by the Japan Society to entertain Japanese notables who had attended the coronation ceremony of Edward VII is Viscount Tadasu Hayashi, a member of the Iwakura mission (which sought the revision of the "unequal treaties") and a key diplomatic player in the promotion and establishment of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902. "In its early years the Lord Mayors of London tended to be closely involved with the Society," Hugh Cortazzi notes (11). The Lord Mayor Sir Marcus Samuel, merchant banker and founder of the Shell Oil Company, who had close business ties with Japan and was a friend of Hayashi, entertained the Japan Society in 1903 with dinner and an exhibition of bonsai and flower arrangements.

The 13th annual dinner in May 1904 was addressed by Baron Kenchô Suematsu, one of the first Japanese graduates of Cambridge and a high-ranking diplomat, also the first translator of The Tale of Genji into English. He was sent to Britain in 1904 for the duration of the Russo-Japanese War to influence politicians and to "manipulate the British press" into an attitude of sympathy towards Japan, according to a Japanese diplomatic document uncovered by Ian Nish (Alliance 284; 388-9). His mission was a success, though it would be seventeen more years until someone (Arthur Waley) came to appreciate his Tale of Genji (see chapter five). In 1911 Prince Yorihito-Higashi Fushima and his wife represented the emperor at the coronation of George V, and were later guests of honour at the Society's annual dinner; the Prince became an honorary patron of

the Society in 1918. Conspicuous among the guests that evening were Admiral Heihachirô Tôgô and General Maresuke Nogi, heroes of the Russo-Japanese War. This was only a year before the death of emperor Meiji and Nogi's own junshi (following one's lord to death, by suicide), the event which transformed Nogi from the inept military strategist that he was into a national institution, the very incarnation of bushidô (see Gluck 221-7). A toast was proposed to the health of Tôgô and Nogi at the Society dinner and they were "loudly cheered," while the Prince "in his speech stressed the valuable service of the Society in promoting friendship between the two countries" (Cortazzi 23). "Friendship" certainly signified mutual reinforcement of the imperial visions of two island empires.

Mere culture, it seems, had never been so important as it was on these occasions of Anglo-Japanese alliances. Both governments had quickly recognized the political force and value of Japanese culture in Britain, as the dealers and promoters were recognizing the profits. The exhibitions of ukiyoe and other arts, the demonstrations of dancing, the displays of bonsai and flower arrangements, the "pathetic and haunting" Japanese music, the exquisitely arranged and exquisitely expensive dinners: for the British these were the "Japanese effects" that were put in the service of the state to exhibit the beauty and grandeur of empire, to aestheticize the processes of politics and economics in which Japan was playing an increasingly important part, and to encourage popular support for the military alliance. And Japanese goodwill soon became vital to the British empire when it became apparent that British naval power in the Far East "was only nominally superior to that of the German Pacific squadron" and was, therefore, dependent upon Japanese support. Imperial naval policy depended upon "this bond" between Japan and Britain, said the First Lord of the Admiralty, Winston Churchill, in March 1914, and the continuing endurance of



this bond depended on promoting goodwill through art exhibitions, cultural exchanges, imperial visits, or symbolic imperial gestures such as the exchange of field-m Marshals' batons between Emperor Taishô and King George V in 1917 (discussed by Nish, Decline 232-48). For the Japanese there was the need for Western capital and technology, as well as foreign markets in which to dispose of mass-produced commodities, such as lacquer-ware.

The manipulation of Western images of Japan was also conducted in the quest for Western recognition and approval of its new international status which, if successful, could hopefully lead to the revision of the unequal treaties that "imposed a straightjacket on Japanese foreign policy. . . . In many ways the history of the first three decades following the Meiji Restoration can be written in terms of treaty revision," wrote Jean-Pierre Lehmann (26-7). The most significant issue of the treaties was the clause of extraterritoriality, whereby a Japanese who committed an offence in Britain was tried by an English magistrate under English law, but a British subject in Japan could only be tried before a British court at his own consul. Extraterritoriality was anathema to a rapidly developing world power, but for the treaties to be abolished Japan had to prove to the Western powers--especially Britain, as foremost of them--that she was 'civilized' by Western standards. "She was expected, so to speak, to pass examinations in Western disciplines, with the Western powers as examinees" (Lehmann 26). What better contrivance than art to demonstrate civility to Westerners when they themselves were upholding it as the supreme feature of Japanese civilization, and in an age when civilization, in the sense of class or refinement, *was* art, as Arnold, Ruskin, Pater, Morris and their disciples understood it. The treaties were finally revised in 1899 after 27 years of toasting, translating, and flower arranging, and in 1902 Britain and Japan became partners, however unequal, in the Anglo-Japanese Alliance that would last until 1921. In

the promotion of both of these important political agreements the Japan Society had clearly played no small part.

The foundation of the Japan Society might be said to represent, paradoxically, both the institutionalization of japonisme, and a moment at which some concerned observers in Britain realized that Japan was not "a large painted and lacquered tea-tray," as Edwin Arnold had written in 1891 (163), but a serious economic competitor in the Far East that had to be understood, and contained, without delay. Even so, the force of a depoliticized, effeminized Japanese culture coupled with strong Western desire to continue to see it that way kept Japan wrapped in a shroud of romantic mystery so far as the general English public was concerned.

That is, until 1905. It would be difficult to overemphasize the extent of the surprise in the West when Japan defeated Russia in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-5. Japan had earlier gained an important and surprising victory over China in 1894, exacting a large war indemnity, but the "Triple Intervention" of Russia, Germany and France forced Japan to give up its claim to the strategically important Liaotung Peninsula. The more significant victory over Russia altered the balance of power in the Far East, and ultimately in the West; it may even be said to have precipitated the outbreak of the First World War and the Russian Revolution (Lehmann 148-9).

That an Asian people, a 'yellow race,' regarded by most Europeans as simply inferior to whites by all accepted natural laws, had defeated a white people was a revelation that shook European confidence in the superiority and even in the sustainability of Western civilization. This was one view, the one that led to the idea of the "Yellow Peril," held principally by conservatives on the Continent and those who had favoured Russia in the war. The other view, held in Continental left-wing circles and by most observers in Britain was that Japan

represented the 'Yellow Hope,' particularly the hope for a declining British Empire. Given its phenomenal example of national recovery and the effective mobilization of national spirit, there must be something in the Japanese national character and culture from which England could learn. Scholars (e.g., Holmes and Ion, Lehmann) have noted that bushidô ('way of the warrior') was among the Japanese 'cultural traits' most frequently cited in contemporary discourse as an explanation for the stunning Japanese military victory; the sudden popular demand for information on the subject was quickly met with a revised 1905 edition of Inazo Nitobe's Bushido: The Soul of Japan (see p. 146).

Nor were members of the Japan Society unaware of the importance of understanding and disseminating the 'way of the warrior' and other 'features' of Japanese culture. Let us then look at some of the 'academic' responses by Japan Society members to the outcome of the Russo-Japanese war. Alfred Stead addressed the issue directly in his panegyric paper on "Japanese Patriotism," attributing all of Japan's recent military and economic successes to patriotism and its offspring, "national efficiency," one of the suitably vague buzzwords of the day. England had to learn from "Japan [who] teaches the world the lesson" of "self-sacrifice for the good of the State. . . .

This sentiment has been fostered by every ethical conviction of the race, especially by *Bushido* and Ancestor worship. . . . As *Bushido* holds that the interests of the family and of its members are one and the same, so should it be with the entire nation. There should be no interests separately for the subjects or the rulers, all should work for the whole, and merge his or her personal interests in those of the whole nation. Thus has *Bushido* made of the Japanese the most patriotic race in the world. (185; 192)

Stead went on to point out how prisons in Japan are "cheerful," educational places and "corporal punishment is as unknown here as in the public schools" (190). "The Western World could learn from Japan," furthermore, "the dangers of a State Church," and observe instead the merits of Emperor and Empire worship (194). The message was clear: "Were the British Empire filled by such a recognition of the duty and privilege of citizenship . . . there would be no doubt as to the security of the heart of the Empire" (201). A member of Stead's audience proposed that bushidô be studied in England. Another member asked, "can we find one single deficiency in this people? The ideal is made visible. . . . The Japanese have everything that a *man* can think and pray and hope for. We in England should have a little more of the chrysanthemum and rather less football" (205-6; emphasis added). The chrysanthemum (kiku), the audience was no doubt aware, is the flower emblem of the Japanese emperor. Perpetuated here also, bushidô notwithstanding, is a clear sense of Japan as suitably soft feminine counterpart to the rough-and-tackle masculinity of the British lion. But the preference for 'chrysanthemums' over 'football' would have to wait until after the war, when 'manly' games were discredited (see chapter five).

Many Japan Society members believed the 'soul of Japan' could be observed not in bushidô but in Japanese art, and that the study and appreciation of that art held the secret to the renewal of the 'spirit' of the British Empire. Marcus Huish's paper entitled, "England's Appreciation of Japanese Art," compared the appreciation of the art of Japan by England, France, Germany, and America, chastising England for what he thought was its relative neglect and indifference; it was no coincidence that, together with Russia, these were England's imperial competitors in the Far East. What is interesting in his analysis is the significance that he placed on the *necessity* of England's entering into competition with other imperialistic nations in acquiring and 'appreciating' Japanese art: "The trend of

art in the future is hardly doubtful . . . We may therefore assuredly anticipate an efflux of Japanese products that it will be well for England to study and cultivate. . . . the races which are earliest to appreciate this will be most certainly those to the fore" (136). Thus, England was dangerously lagging behind other "races" in Japanese art appreciation and the very future of her ascendancy in world civilization seemed to depend on more art exhibitions.

What could the Japan Society do? "It has up to the present been disposed to lay out its surplus funds in, I will not say riotous living, but in *soirées*, and suchlike rather than in education," said Huish, "the money so spent might have met a great want in the maintenance of a Japanese expert and translator" (137).

Exactly a year later the Society

took part in a deputation which called on the Prime Minister . . . to urge 'the appointment of a Departmental Committee to consider generally and in detail the present allocation of grants by the several Governmental Departments for the purpose of instruction in Oriental languages'. From this initiative grew the School of Oriental and African studies in the University of London. (Cortazzi 20)

And in the very first Bulletin of the School appeared some of the first translations of Arthur Waley, England's new Japanese "expert and translator." For the time being, however, the Society had to be content with getting together an exhibition of Japanese artworks that displayed "everything connected with war" (Huish 138). The victory of England's ally was her own victory--and the likes of Professor Longford of the Society were the first to assert (in 1905) that "even the aggregate of all that has been done for Japan by all the other political and commercial Powers of the West is scarcely surpassed by what has been done by the English alone" (82). Thus had Japan flourished under England's beneficent tutelage. It was only tradition to celebrate the passing of exams with a triumphal

display of war ornaments, a primitive ritual that quite deliberately recalled the glory of the ancient Roman Empire, as the art historians Carol Duncan and Alan Wallach have shown (449).

Samuel Middleton Fox read a paper before the Society in 1905 entitled, "Some Lessons from Japan," in which he also spelled out the usefulness and importance of Japanese art to the national programme. Japanese art, unlike European art that has striven "to embody beauty," has "sought chiefly to please. . . . While our art is dignified and solemn with its message of edification, theirs is bubbling over with the joy of life" (70). This joy of life is instantly translated into joy of work, and consequently "at Kobe we find the ships are coaled by strings of happy, healthy, laughing girls" even though, he acknowledged, "men, women, and children work in the manufacturies from twelve to sixteen hours a day at wages from a penny to two shillings" (61). Japan was really a capitalist's paradise that could be made to appear as socialist utopia by the dexterous arrangement of art imagery: "in 'John Bull's Other Island,' one of Mr. Bernard Shaw's characters gives his idea of heaven as of a commonwealth 'where work is play and play is life.' Life in Japan comes near to that," Fox declared, adding that in Japan the dreams of Morris and Ruskin were realized (68).

As for Japanese women, continued Fox, "their women are probably happier than ours," as they are "trained (even more than boys are trained) to the bliss of self-abnegation . . . the ambition of every woman . . . is to be the wife of a great man and the mother of illustrious sons" (75). Quoting Jinzô Naruse, the founder of the first university for women in Japan, Fox argued that "modern education has many evils as well as advantages, and its greatest evil for girls is the danger of making them unfit for their future home duties" (76). Or for sixteen-hour days working for pennies. Again the message was clear: Japan had shown England just what a valuable resource lay wasted in its women; women could be

effectively mobilized, empowered, and put to work. Culture, as E. H. Norman long ago recognized, had a definite role to play in the oppression of [Japanese] women:

the lessons in flower arrangement or moral teaching (*i.e.*, respect for the state and family) and the isolated life of the young girls are all part of a well recognized policy designed to keep their minds 'pure' from such 'dangerous thoughts' as trade unionism or any other ideas of improving the economic position of the working class. (qtd. in Dower 21)

Thus capitalism had no quarrel with socialism or feminism; what, if it was only art that they wanted to keep them laughing and coaling the ships.

It seems peculiar in hindsight that Japan of all nations should be lauded by British socialists as a model for England, since we know well enough now that Japan was no hero of the left. But those who opposed British imperialism for various political and moral reasons saw Japan as a possible leader of the East against the imperialist West. Thus Henry Hyndman, founder of the British Social Democratic Federation and editor of the left-wing weekly Justice, stated his position concerning the Russo-Japanese War:

All who hold, therefore, as we hold, that Asiatics have a perfect right to work out their own destinies untrammelled by unscrupulous European civilization; all who hold, as we hold, that a further extension of China, of the infamies of Russian rule in Asia and in Europe, or, for that matter, of the infamies of British rule in India, would be most injurious to mankind, must necessarily wish well to Japan in the coming struggle.

. . . Moreover I hope that the result of this war will be to awaken China in earnest too. I hope that the people of that great and ancient

civilization, encouraged and enlightened by Japanese example and Japanese leadership, will, ere long, make a clean sweep of the Russian, French, German, English and other marauders who wish to break down her Empire and dominate her peaceful and industrious population. That is what I hope. (qtd. in Lehmann 157)

Somehow Japan's own role as colonizer in Formosa and Korea, 'awakening,' 'encouraging,' and 'enlightening' the natives was seen as different from Western imperialism. Perhaps this was because of the persistent orientalist-reductive tendency to see the world as West and non-West, with Japan clearly belonging to the other. Or perhaps British socialists simply accepted Okakura's eager assertion that "Asia is one" and Japan was Asia's 'natural' leader. The presumptuous declaration had appeared in his Ideals of the East (1903) and would become by the 1930s a battle cry for Japanese ultra-nationalists who appropriated the concept and renamed it the "Greater East Asian Co-prosperity sphere" (Kramer 171). But in 1905 and for many years to come Japan was in favour and, as we shall observe in the next chapter, the support and promotion of Japan and Japanese culture by British academics and socialists would eventually attract a young Cambridge scholar who happened to be inclined towards socialism and the arts: Arthur Waley.

Before introducing Waley, however, I would like to conclude this chapter with a brief discussion of an important event in which the Japan Society took part. We observed earlier the importance of international exhibitions in promoting the appreciation of Japanese arts in Europe. The Japan Society also played a significant role in this regard, although for smaller, more select audiences. In 1910 the two 'institutions' came together for the Japan-British Exhibition at Shepherd's Bush, London, held "under the auspices of the Imperial Japanese Government" (Times 6 May 1910: 1). Earlier exhibitions, as suggested,



had been great "parades of booty from the colonies" when Japan might well have become one of them, but Japan by 1910 was a colonizer in its own right and Britain's partner in the Anglo-Japanese alliance; indeed, the alliance had undoubtedly facilitated Japanese incursions in Manchuria (Kornicki, "Public Display" 167). And from July 1909 through 1910, Japan was indicating through diplomatic channels her intention to annex Korea, a move that had been hitherto resisted for fear of world opinion. What Japan required above all in order to win approval for its latest imperial plan was Britain's "full and cordial support," argued the Japanese ambassador to Britain, Takaaki Katô (qtd. in Nish Decline, 33).

Britain was not initially in favour of a move that might "heap international odium on Japan and also on Japan's ally"; that annexation was eventually accomplished and tacitly accepted on 22 August 1910 was "surely a tribute," says Nish, to Katô's unceasing diplomatic efforts in London (Decline 33, 35). It will be recalled that as Japanese ambassador Katô was also President of the Japan Society, and an element of his diplomacy in London at the time was the Exhibition that opened in May 1910, which was treated by the Japanese government "as a state enterprise." Though Japan had been suffering from a serious economic depression since 1907, "a bill appropriating a larger amount than Japan had spent before on such a project was approved by the Diet without a dissenting vote" (Nish Decline, 11)

The Japanese government then persuaded the Imperial Household as well as several important collectors among the Japanese nobility to lend pieces from their collections for the exhibition, which they reluctantly did "on the distinct understanding that we shall never again commit such a sacrilege," said Hirokichi Mutsu (qtd. in Conant 87). To publicize the event the Japanese exchequer contributed £3000 towards a lavishly illustrated special supplement to

the Times "which probably cost £10,000. There were [also] colossal entertainments and elaborate garden parties" attended by royalty and dignitaries from both countries, as well as Japan Society members who were everywhere to be seen (Nish Decline, 12). Among the features of the Exhibition were wax figures of the 'war heroes' Tôgô and Nogi, and "the war department showed elaborate dioramas of major battles and recent victories. Virtually an entire building was devoted to Japan's 'beneficent' activities in Formosa, Kwantung and Korea" (Conant 87).

Korea's annexation had not yet even been publicly announced, but the imperialist message was duly received without a murmur; the same complicit silence greeted the many appeals to Britain from expatriate Korean organizations (Nish, Decline 33). As for the Japan Society, it was

not only their duty, but pleasure to participate in the Exhibition, and in response to their application a space was allotted to them by the promoters, which the Japanese Commission most courteously undertook to decorate as a mark of their esteem for the Society's efforts towards the *rapprochement* of the two empires. ("Japan-British Ex." Trans. 9: 131.)

The Society duly contributed some objects to the Exhibition that were intended, says Cortazzi, "to form a 'bridge' between the British and Japanese parts of the exhibition" (22). That 'bridge' was a counterpoint on the theme of war, signifying the noble historical precedents of modern-day militarism, as among the items contributed were two suits of armour lent by King Edward VII from Windsor Castle, a suit of armour from the Tower of London, and two spears and eleven swords that had been presented to the Duke of Edinburgh and to Queen Victoria by the Emperor of Japan on her jubilee (Trans. 9: 131-6). There was also a portrait of Takaaki Katô, lent to the Japan Society by Katô himself. Even the

Official Report of the Japan-British Exhibition stated that the aim of the Exhibition had been "to draw still closer the bonds of friendship so happily existing between the two Island Empires of the East and West" (qtd. in Conant 79). To the ambiguous idea of 'art appreciation' we must add this notion of 'bonds of friendship,' an equally innocuous vague phrase suggesting some virtuous courtly ideal, though deliberately concealing the less noble cruelties of imperialism in practice.

The Japan-British Exhibition was not unanimously well-received. Much of the English criticism, however, rather than examining specific artworks or novel art techniques, simply reiterated familiar orientalist tropes of difference, 'oriental degradation' and otherness. Waley's friend Kenneth Clark, writing many years later, remembered the Japanese Government's "great manifestation of progress and goodwill," but complained of the "degraded style" of the Japanese buildings at the Exhibition (43). The art critic of the Athenaeum had this to say about the Art Section:

The fact that with this race the artistic impulse is the rule, while with us it is only a more or less thriving exotic, makes this occasion of contact with them important, even if it comes at a time when they have passed their highest point of artistic culture. We may be inclined to flatter the productions of the Japanese craftsmen in the exhibition because the workmen are themselves picturesque. . . . With a reasonable readiness to be pleased, we may indeed find it delightful, without thereby implying that the art is of a high order. Just so, when a troupe of Japanese jugglers appears at a London music-hall, we are always presented with a beautiful piece of decoration. ("Japan-British Exhibition" 648)

Thus, the greatness of Japan lies not in its extraordinary present but in its distant past, though somehow the people remain unchangingly 'artistic.' In a remark that strongly resembles Wilde's famous observation cited above, the Japanese artists themselves are also seen as only art imagery, "decoration" to satisfy an English taste for the exotic. A general tone of condescension pervades this unpleasant review.

The Japan-British Exhibition nevertheless marks a major turning point in British history and culture. It was only coincidence that the "Grand Opening Ceremony" that was to have taken place on the 12th of May had to be cancelled due to the death of King Edward four days earlier. But the greatest exhibition of Japanese art to have been held in Britain, together with the Chinese Exhibition of the same year (and Roger Fry's first exhibition of Post-Impressionism), were already proclaiming the death of Edwardian culture and announcing the advent of a new age for art and politics. And the dead King's brother, Prince Arthur of Connaught, Honorary President of the Exhibition, Patron of the Japan Society, and leader of the Mission that presented the Emperor Meiji with the Order of the Garter, was still there to inaugurate the Exhibition. In his speech he deplored the continuing ignorance of Japan by "most of the people of this country" and maintained that the "careful study of the art and thought of Japan may indeed make us pause to ask ourselves whether there is not something at least as good as, or better than, the utilitarian civilization of the Twentieth Century" (qtd. in Wolfers 15). Art for art's sake has evidently been displaced by art for the sake of politics, but Japan was still only admired for its aesthetic, and remained removed in time and place from the twentieth century and the lamentably utilitarian West.

## CHAPTER TWO

### Arthur Waley

What was it that we talked about at Cambridge? I know that we talked every day for hours on end, and I can see it happening. I can see Maynard coming into Francis' room about nine o'clock on a summer evening, wearing the sort of straw hat that now only a few old-fashioned fishmongers wear. He throws himself into a chair, with his hands in his pockets; and I can see him talking and talking, meeting occasional interruptions with a deft use of the slight stammer that he was then cultivating, until three in the morning. . . . after Cambridge I missed these conversations very much, and I can remember some one . . . saying that to see Roger Fry was like being back at Cambridge, because he was ready at any moment to discuss 'the intellectual topics of the day,' . . . in those days the difficulty was not to talk. People shouted each other down or, if better mannered, kept a remark waiting on the tip of the tongue for half an hour, ready to fling it across the room if there was an instant's lull. . . . And there for the moment the matter must end; for the 267th raid is a pretty fierce one, and I am going down to the small cupboard under the stairs where . . . problems of conversation are not likely to arise.

(Arthur Waley, "Intellectual Conversation," 33-7)

Arthur Waley would be remembered by many for his "problems of conversation" or "famous silences" (e.g., Watson 139), though this characteristic was not in evidence at Cambridge, as Waley in the epigraph suggests. Nor did any problems of conversation extend to the written word: in half a century between 1916 and 1964 he published nearly forty books and over a hundred and thirty articles. But very little is known of the prolific author of these works. This chapter is a brief biography of Waley. Since I am primarily concerned with the reception and function of his Japanese translations in English culture, I have made no attempt to draw the sort of intimate, affectionate portrait that Marian Ury gives us of Waley's companion, Beryl de Zoete ("Some Notes Toward A Life"). For a more reverent, venerating portrait of Waley, readers can refer to

Ivan Morris's Madly Singing in the Mountains (1970). Rather, this chapter focuses on Waley's formative years, the years up until he made his decision to become an orientalist and devote his life to the study and translation of classical Asian literature. Three aspects of Waley's identity are important, aspects that other scholars (e.g., Perlmutter, Morris) have either downplayed or ignored, though aspects which, in my opinion, had an influence on Waley's scholarship. The three are his socialism, his bisexual tendency, and his Jewish background, all of which, in different though related ways, were connected to his interest in Asia.

Arthur Waley was born Arthur David Schloss at Tunbridge Wells, England, on the 19th of August 1889, the second of three sons of David Frederick Schloss (1850-1912) and Rachel Sophia Waley (1864-1940). He was "of purely Jewish stock," in the words of his sister-in-law, Margaret Waley.<sup>14</sup> His maternal grandfather was Jacob Waley (1818-1873), the first occupant of the Chair of Political Economy at London University, the first president of the Anglo-Jewish Association, and only the fourth Jew in England to be called before the bar. David Schloss, Arthur's father, was also a barrister and an economist who served in the Board of Trade's Labour Department. An acknowledged authority on labour and industrial problems, he had been one of the investigators on Charles Booth's famous 1889 survey of London, and was British Commissioner to the 1910 Congress on Unemployment held in Paris.

Schloss wrote economic tracts such as Insurance Against Unemployment (1909), and Methods of Industrial Remuneration (1892), the latter going into three editions with translations into French and Italian (Perlmutter 2). It was also cited along with two of his other publications in a Fabian tract entitled, "What to Read on Social and Economic Subjects" (Tract 29). Schloss was a

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<sup>14</sup> Margaret H. Waley. "Arthur David Waley, 1889-1966: A view from within his family" (unpublished).

member of the Fabian Society and a friend of Sidney and Beatrice Webb who engaged him as a Hutchinson Lecturer at their newly established London School of Economics (B. Webb, Diary 2: 72). His dedicated concern for social reform was encouraged by his association with the Fabians, but it was also nurtured through a long tradition of social amelioration among the prominent Jews of England. Thus, he also brought his civil and communal expertise to the Jewish Board of Guardians, on which he served as the honorary secretary of the Sanitary Committee, and worked towards improving the notoriously poor housing conditions of communities in London's East End, where many less privileged Jews then resided. "Alexanders, Raphaels, Keyzers, Lucases and Schlosses, not to mention Franklins (related to Waleys and Montagus) and Samuels, served on the board from generation to generation and brought in-laws and relations to aid the cause" (Black 25).

The Waleys were a large clan within the Anglo-Jewish group known as 'the cousinhood,' described by Chaim Bermant as "a compact union of exclusive brethren with blood and money flowing in a small circle" (1). Included in that small circle were "Montefiores, Rothschilds, Solomons, Cohens, Goldsmids, Waleys, Samuels and the families related to them" (Levine 7). Early generations of the cousinhood had prospered in England when Jews were virtually excluded from the professions and public service. They used their wealth in sustained and coordinated efforts throughout the nineteenth century towards many progressive causes, from Jewish emancipation to the abolition of slavery, prison reform, and public education. One of the results of these efforts was the establishment of London University on 30 April, 1827; the present site on Gower street was purchased for the university for £30,000 by Isaac Lyon Goldsmid, though it was ten more years before the Government granted the university the right to award degrees. Jacob Waley was one of the first graduates, and from his

time until the repeal of the Test Act opened Oxford and Cambridge to Jews in 1871, London University was "the finishing school for the Cousinhood" (Bermant 62).

Arthur Waley attended a pre-preparatory school at Chilverton Elms until 1899 together with C. K. Scott-Moncrieff, the future translator of Marcel Proust. He then studied at Lockers Park Prep School from 1899-1902, where he was in the first eleven at cricket. He received a classical scholarship for academic distinction to Rugby, which he attended from 1903-1906. There he was a classmate of Rupert Brooke, though Brooke preceded him up to King's College, Cambridge, since Waley was considered too young yet to enter; instead, he was sent to Europe with a tutor for a year to master French and German, which he did (M. Waley 7). He went up to Cambridge on a classical scholarship in 1907.

It might be asked why Rugby and Cambridge were chosen instead of schools like London University that were more amenable to the Jewish community? An answer is provided by Margaret Waley in a paragraph that is worth quoting:

David Schloss . . . had a specially close relationship with his godfather, a childless brother of his mother called Frederick Mocatta. This man was a strict Jew and wanted his great nephews to be educated at Clifton College where there was a Jewish house. David Schloss knew he would be his uncle's chief heir if he agreed to this but he believed that Rugby gave a better education and his integrity allowed no compromises. Not only did he forego this fortune but when his sons won scholarships he did not use the money to pay their school fees. Sigi's scholarship money educated a friend's son but Arthur could not remember what happened to his. (6)

Mocatta later forgave his nephew to the tune of thirty thousand pounds upon his death in 1905 (about £1.2 million in current value), but David Schloss's



earlier defiance of his Jewish ancestor(s) is indicative both of the extreme importance that was placed upon education in the Schloss family, and of the desire of some Anglo-Jews to assimilate rather than instill in their children a strong sense of Jewish identity. Unfortunately, as we will soon see, open anti-Semitism in the mainstream Church of England schools ensured that Jews were made to know who they were.

It was only at Cambridge that Waley began to define himself, although largely through the friends with whom he associated and the intellectual circles in which he moved. His name not yet changed and no reputation yet established, 'Arthur Schloss' crops up here and there in memoirs and letters, usually overshadowed by his more gregarious and extroverted companions. Most accounts of Cambridge in the Edwardian period point out the profound intellectual influence of the Cambridge philosopher and Apostle<sup>15</sup> G. E. Moore (1873-1958), whose Principia Ethica (1903) laid emphasis on the pleasures of human relationships, an absolute devotion to truth, and the application to important philosophical questions of plain 'English' common sense. Perlmutter maintains that Waley "sat at the feet" of his Cambridge mentors, Moore and G. Lowes Dickinson (1862-1932). Dickinson's impassioned polemic, Letters from John Chinaman (1901), mentioned in chapter one, is said to have brought about the initiation of the Anglo-Chinese Society at Cambridge (Perlmutter 5-6), though there is no evidence that Waley then had anything to do with it. More important as an influence on Waley, perhaps, were Dickinson's pro-Asian, or pan-Asian, and anti-imperialist political views, which deeply affected

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<sup>15</sup> The Apostles were an exclusive intellectual society formed in Cambridge University in 1820 for the purpose of friendship and intellectual debate. Members were elected by invitation only. Nineteenth century members included A. Hallam, Tennyson, R. Milnes and R. C. Trench. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Society became closely associated with the Bloomsbury Group, as M. Keynes, L. Strachey, L. Woolf and E. M. Forster were elected. Waley's friend Bertrand Russell was also an Apostle.

Rabindranath Tagore and may have occasioned Kakuzo Okakura's Ideals of the East (see footnote 13; also Kramer, 175). In brief, these men shared a belief in the essential unity and spirituality of Asian nations, and for a time, looked hopefully to Japan as a possible leader of Asia against Western materialism and imperialism. Since Dickinson was a mentor who became a close friend, he almost certainly influenced the development of Waley's political convictions. Dickinson may also have influenced Waley in other ways that we will see later in this chapter and in chapter four.

The tremendous influence of Moore on the 'Old Bloomsbury' undergraduates of 1903 is made abundantly clear in the memoirs of the Apostles Maynard Keynes and Leonard Woolf. It is less clear, on the other hand, that he had the same effect on a much younger Waley, who in 1903 had only just entered Rugby. Although Moore's influence at Cambridge was pervasive and lasting, a more careful examination of the years 1907-10, when Waley attended, reveals that by this time other important influences had begun to take over at the university. As the Bloomsbury scholar S. P. Rosenbaum has commented, "Bloomsbury's formative beliefs are not to be simplistically equated with those enumerated by John Maynard Keynes in the famous memoir of his early beliefs," as Perlmutter appears to have done (x). Keynes himself, according to Robert Skidelsky, acknowledged that Moore "seemed less relevant to the new generation of students than Mr. and Mrs. Webb, Bernard Shaw, H. G. Wells, and even William Morris" (239). By 1907, Fabian Socialism had arrived at Cambridge.

Waley first joined a literary group of friends at Cambridge called the 'Carbonari,' or charcoal burners, named after a band of nineteenth century Italian revolutionaries. The Carbonari were a self-consciously exclusive group formed by Hugh Dalton and Rupert Brooke and were devoted to "the liquidation of Victorianism" (Hassall 157). The group revolved around the magnetic

personality of Brooke who was renowned for his physical beauty as well as his passion for poetry. "I first heard of [Brooke]," said D. H. Lawrence in his famous eulogy, "as a Greek God under a Japanese Sunshade, reading poetry in his pyjamas, at Grantchester, upon the lawns where the river goes" (qtd. in Delany xvi). The mention of the Japanese sunshade suggests a casual interest in Japanese things among the Brooke's circle; as in Wilde's Picture of Dorian Grey, noted in chapter one, it is meant to signify a cultured, refined sensibility and it becomes part of the greater Rupert Brooke myth. A similar 'Japanese effect' appears as the Japanese screen in the background of Duncan Grant's 1909-10 painting of James Strachey, which Brooke called "the famous picture of James' legs" (Turnbagh, plate 38). In spite of the bold proclamation, japonisme evidently was not one of the legacies of the Victorian period to be liquidated, and by this time it was so entrenched in British art and literary circles that more often it was simply taken for granted and received no special comment.

Waley then became a member of the Cambridge Fabian Society along with Brooke, Frederick "Ben" Keeling (president), Hugh Dalton (president-elect), Gerald Shove, James Strachey, Dudley Ward, and several others. Like the Carbonari, the Cambridge Fabians were a social as well as a socialist society, dedicated at least as much to parties and poetry as to changing the world. As Ben Keeling wrote of Fabian evenings, "jovial feasts, attended by any number up to thirty people, and subsequent 'squashes,' became a feature of the evenings when there were meetings" (10). But becoming a Cambridge Fabian was a fairly serious business that demanded some careful self-examination; it required personal sponsorship and the signing of the Basis, which contained two parts: "(i) a declaration of assent and the terms of the Basis (ii) a summary of the aims: to free land and industrial capital from individual and class ownership, to do away with Rent through the abolition of private property . . ." (qtd. in Hassall 157). Signing

the Basis was thus a bold and defiant step for the privileged children of land and capital, although this step may have been less defiant for Arthur Schloss, whose father was already committed to similar causes.

The Cambridge Fabians were obviously and inevitably influenced by the Webbs, as well as other important Fabian members such as Wells and Shaw. Again, Ben Keeling: "the most prominent London Fabians were generous in helping us. . . . Webb, and Mrs. Webb, Shaw, Wells, Granville Barker, [Sydney] Olivier, [Edward] Pease, Keir Hardie, Pete Curran, and Dr. Südekum (of the Reichstag) all addressed meetings for us" (10). According to Leonard Woolf, who became a Fabian in 1913, "in an age of incipient revolt" against "bourgeois Victorianism," Swinburne, Shaw, Samuel Butler, Hardy and Wells were "champions of freedom of speech and freedom of thought, of common-sense and reason. We felt that, with them as our leaders, we were struggling against a religious and moral code of cant and hypocrisy . . ." (*Sowing* 151-2).

The Fabians were among those who had been caught up in the passionate enthusiasm for Japan following the defeat of Russia in 1904-5 (see pp. 32-8). Wells had called his ruling elite in *A Modern Utopia* (1905) the "Samurai," a caste who were admired for their ascetic way of life and puritanical ethic. By abstaining from regular sexual intercourse, Wells' samurai were portrayed as paragons of self-abnegation, devoted as they were to the service of the state. Wells gave regular talks on socialism to the Cambridge Fabians; on at least one occasion, when he spoke on "The Future of the Family" in Brooke's rooms, the presence of Arthur Schloss was noted (West 315).

As early as 1904 Beatrice Webb had expressed her admiration for Japan and the Japanese as "the only coloured nation that could be compared favourably with any European state" (Winter 185). This admiration culminated in the Webbs' 1911-12 visit to Asia, where the Webbs found their prejudices confirmed:

Long before our journey to the Far East in 1911 the Japanese had seemed to us certainly the most arresting, and perhaps the most gifted of the coloured races belonging to the ancient civilizations of the Asiatic continent. . . . Who would have foreseen that the little yellow men and women pictured in Gilbert and Sullivan's popular musical comedy *The Mikado*, with their fantastic rites and ceremonies and flippant and even naughty ways, would not only defeat the Chinese multitudinous armies, but would beat back decisively and once for all, in 1905, the steam roller of Tsarist Russia, reputed to be one of the great powers of the European continent. . . . Moreover, we had heard about Japan from our friend Sir Charles Eliot, after his visit in 1907, and he, after all, with his knowledge of Eastern languages, was an authority on the subject.

(Travel Diary 27)

The Webbs' views on race, offensive reading today, were not exceptional in Victorian or Edwardian society. It is interesting to note the authority they accord to the orientalist Sir Charles Eliot, who by virtue of his linguistic gifts is deemed an expert on Japan. In fact, Eliot did not begin to learn Japanese until 1919 (see Smith).

In the summer of 1908 Waley attended a Fabian Summer School overseen by the Webbs. The summer school, Beatrice recorded in her diary, was held in "two or three houses on the mountainous coast of North Wales" that were "filled to overflowing for seven weeks with some hundred Fabians and sympathizers." They talked "mostly of economics and political science," Beatrice was pleased to observe, though she was otherwise shocked by the "surprisingly open" discussion of other issues such as sex and dancing, and by the scandalous

activities of the younger men and women who were not following the prescribed samurai code to her satisfaction. Fortunately, however,

there is some really useful intellectual intercourse going on between the elders, and between them and the younger ones. The Cambridge men are a remarkable set, quite the most remarkable the Fabian Society has hitherto attracted - fervent and brilliant.

I had seven of the Cambridge Fabians to stay with me on their way to Wales. Two are remarkable men - Keeling and Dalton . . . The other five were, I think, commonplace - Schloss, Strachey, Brooke (a poetic beauty) and Shove; perhaps Dudley Ward was a little over the line of medium capacity and character. (Diary 3: 98)

Webb was right to recognize the merits of this elite group, though it was clearly the "commonplace" ones--Schloss, Strachey, and Brooke--who went on to achieve the greatest fame.<sup>16</sup>

Several distinguishing characteristics of Fabianism should be made clear at this point. Briefly put, the Fabians were imperialist, elitist, and paternalistic, a self-appointed 'intellectual aristocracy,' although some of the younger members did appear to hold a progressive position on women's issues; Ben Keeling claimed the Cambridge Fabians were "the first Society in the University . . . to admit women as members. We were all keen Feminists" (10). But the imperialist position was made clear by Shaw in his 1900 Fabian tract, Fabianism and the Empire. According to Shaw, Britain had a civilizing imperial mission to ensure that the world was governed "in the interests of civilization as a whole" (23). H.

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<sup>16</sup> Ben Keeling (1886-1916) founded the Cambridge branch of the Fabians. He was killed in WW I at the Somme. Hugh Dalton (1887-1962) studied economics at King's and went on to become a prominent member of the Labour Party. Gerald Shove (1887-1947) became a Cambridge Apostle in 1909 and an economist after graduation. He was strongly attached to the Bloomsbury group; Clive Bell called him part of "the old gang" (qtd. in Rosenbaum 118). Dudley Ward (1885-1957) became a civil servant and banker, serving under Keynes at the Paris Peace Conference. James Strachey (1887-1967) became a psychoanalyst and translated the works of Sigmund Freud into English.

G. Wells's Anticipations (1902), in which he foresaw a future scientific and mechanized society (i.e. advanced), has been recently described by John Callaghan as a "profoundly authoritarian, racist and elitist book" (42). The Webbs, in a 1913 article entitled "The Guardianship of the Non-adult Races," spoke of the moral obligation of 'advanced' Europeans to protect and nurture 'backward' Asian and African nations. "Who could deny, they argued, that the Pacific Islanders, the Malays, the Arabs, the Kaffirs, the Negroes, and 'all the indigenous inhabitants of the Asiatic mainland' were, in their 'capacity for corporate self-defence and self-government, *Non-adult races*'" (qtd. in Winter 189). The one exception was Japan, whose 'efficiency' and capacity for social and political organization distinguished them in the minds of the Webbs and justified their colonization of the 'defenceless' Asian mainland. The Fabian position on Empire was made clear to new members; indeed, Hugh Dalton recorded that his decision to join the Cambridge Fabians had been made only once he had been "reassured" that the Fabian leadership was not "against the Empire" (44).

In spite of Shaw's contention that the Fabians had "no distinctive opinions on the Marriage Question, Religion, Art . . ." they surely held a special position in their socialist platform for the arts (qtd. in Callaghan 39). This was due in part to the input of Shaw himself, who would intersperse socialist lectures with readings from his plays, thereby demonstrating that art was compatible with socialism, and that it had an important role to play in the edification of the 'lower classes.'<sup>17</sup> The Cambridge Fabians inherited the mantle and their meetings were given over to discussions of socialist issues combined with poetry

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<sup>17</sup> "Raymond Williams has pointed to the interesting contradiction between the social radicalism of much naturalistic theatre (Shaw, for example) and the formal methods of such drama. The discourse of the play may be urging change, criticism, rebellion; but the dramatic forms - itemize the furniture and aim for an exact 'verisimilitude' - inevitably enforce upon us a sense of the unalterable solidity of this social world, all the way down to the colour of the maid's stockings" (Eagleton 187).

readings. "Ben Keeling had a genuine belief in Art," wrote an anonymous friend in Keeling Letters (14). Many of Brooke's early poems were first presented to his Cambridge peers, and in 1910 Brooke delivered a Fabian lecture that articulated the notable tensions that were perceived to exist between high art and popular culture, and between the arts and a true social democracy. Brooke's "Democracy and the Arts" says Ian Britain, is a "complex interplay of elitist and anti-elitist impulses" (270). An example of the former betrays the condescending paternalism of the Fabians towards the 'lower classes,' whose artistic tastes, they felt, must be uplifted along with their standard of living: "it is only natural," Brooke argued, "that the taste of the lower classes should be at present infinitely worse than ours . . . It is the future--their future fineness--we work for" (73). The Fabian civilizing mission thus had important applications both at home and abroad.

Waley was a "keen Fabian" at Cambridge, though it is uncertain whether he remained involved with them after graduation (M. Waley 9). Margaret Waley informs us that he "always regarded himself as a left winger in politics though he took no active part in them," a view that evidently does not regard orientalism as a political activity in its own right (9). It is also difficult to determine the extent to which he either subscribed to or resisted the views of his Fabian peers or 'elders.' The Fabians, Callaghan notes, were themselves "divided on important issues and would always consist of socialists with very different views" (30). The Webbs were widely respected but they were also at times treated as figures of fun. So Leonard Woolf--a committed anti-imperialist--admired them but confessed "they were so absurd that you could not caricature them for they were always caricaturing themselves" (Beginning Again 115). Hugh Dalton in later years would ridicule their obsession with Japan, although this was obviously an easier position to take in 1957 than it was in 1907 (131). Yet from



1917 Waley began to publish in the New Statesman, established by the Webbs in 1913 as an organ of socialist propaganda. Over the following thirty years this left-wing journal published nineteen of his articles, more than any other except the Bulletin of SOAS, which published an equal number (see Johns).

The New Statesman was also closely associated with Bloomsbury in its early years. With Leonard Woolf as the leading political columnist and reviewer, and Desmond MacCarthy as literary editor, the New Statesman published regular contributions from Virginia Woolf, Clive Bell and Roger Fry, and occasional reviews from E. M. Forster and Lytton Strachey. Until 1923, when Keynes and "his fellow consortium members secured control of the Nation and Athenaeum," the New Statesman enjoyed a brief tenure as "Bloomsbury's house magazine," according to Adrian Smith (192). Eleven of Waley's nineteen articles in the New Statesman were published by 1923 during this period of Bloomsbury influence. Waley was also, like the Webbs and many other Western intellectuals, an enthusiastic observer of developments in Soviet Russia, although he became "more quickly disillusioned" (Ury 33). His "hatred of imperialism" certainly put him at odds with the pro-empire Fabians, but his anti-imperialism was not revealed until after the First War, by which time such a position was more acceptable and would not likely be challenged (Gray 1044). He would frequently argue that plundered works of Chinese art should rightly be returned to them, thus expressing an understanding of colonial practices, but again, this view was only put forward after he himself had made good use of that art to establish his own career (H. Waley 127).

Ambiguous is a term that will often be employed in locating the position of Arthur Waley, and it is a particularly useful one to apply to his politics (and sexuality). Like Rupert Brooke, and like other Bloomsbury members, he appears to have had a "social conscience" and was not quite the "withdrawn and languid

aesthete[s]" that its critics made Bloomsbury members out to be (Williams 155). Yet he clearly withdrew from the political and organizational involvement of socialists like his father, Leonard Woolf, Ben Keeling, or Maynard Keynes. His contribution to anti-imperialist politics, to borrow a phrase from Raymond Williams, consisted of a "conscientious identification with [its] victims," particularly through the translation of Chinese literature; as such, the contribution was certainly momentous (156).

The paradox is that as a British orientalist employed by the British Museum he inevitably became part of a complex dialectic of knowledge and power in which most of the power lay on the British side. Translating the literature of East Asia was a means of entering into a sympathetic relationship with that part of the world, of but it was also a means of appropriating its culture, codifying its poetics, and recreating it in *our* language for *our* privileged consumption. Waley also translated a very specific selection of literature of China's other colonizer, Japan, that contributed to an illusory perception of Japan in the West as an essentially aesthetic, benign nation of artists and art lovers; this when Japan was busily colonizing, militarizing, and ruthlessly suppressing its own people. We can only conclude that he, like the Webbs and many others of various political stripes, had been caught up in the euphoric 'cult of Japan' atmosphere that prevailed in Britain from the time of Oscar Wilde until well into the 1920s, reaching a climax in the critical 1905-12 period. He may well have been influenced by the pan-Asian ideology of Dickinson and led to believe that Japan could lead Asia against the West. I believe that by the early 1930s he was, to some extent, to regret it. He subsequently turned his attention to the new socialist alternatives in Russia and China.

On 27 July 1908 Waley read a paper entitled "Relationships" to the "Fabian Boys" in Ben Keeling's rooms that was attended by Maynard Keynes who recounted the paper and the evening in a letter to Duncan Grant.

"Relationships," complained Keynes, was

a dreadful, silly, maundering paper, followed by a blithering speech from Daddy [Hugh] Dalton. In spite of the serried ranks of females, the paper was chiefly about sodomy which is called 'the passionate love of comrades'. Really James is quite right - these Fabians talk about nothing else. . . . The thing has grown with leaps and bounds in my two years of absence and practically everybody in Cambridge, except me, is an open and avowed sodomite. (qtd. in Skidelsky, 1: 195)

This is probably the most overt piece of evidence we have of what so many other observers appear to have taken considerable pains to conceal. Upon leaving Cambridge in 1910, Hugh Dalton destroyed all of his personal papers--except letters from Brooke (Pimlott 37). There is some evidence to suspect that Waley may have done the same.<sup>18</sup> The subject of Keynes's own homosexuality is conspicuously absent from his memoirs, though his biographer tells us he "carefully preserved the letters in which they talked about these matters and expected that one day they would become public knowledge" (Skidelsky 129).<sup>19</sup> Nearly all of the members of Waley's social circle tended towards homosexuality or bisexuality, but in the early years of this century the "consequences of being

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<sup>18</sup> Daniel Waley (Waley's nephew) says, "I doubt whether he ever kept letters." Letter to the author, 22 May 1999. It is also possible, however, that Waley's personal letters were accidentally thrown away. See p. 11 in the introduction.

<sup>19</sup> Keynes apparently practiced 'sodomy' but appears to have experienced considerable discomfort discussing it, even privately; another way of putting it is that he (and others, such as Brooke) made a distinction between romantic love between men and the physical act. So this letter continues, "Dear Duncan if I could kiss you and hold your hand I should be perfectly happy, and from wanting to I am discontented and almost, not quite, miserable. Find us a lovely cottage in the North and we will stay there forever . . ." (qtd. in Skidelsky, 1: 195). Waley also, after this occasion of outspokenness, became silent on the subject.

found out could be catastrophic," writes Skidelsky (129). Martin Green agrees that Bloomsbury members were "paralyzingly discreet about their sexual heresy" (27). Clearly, the relatively recent and highly publicized trial and prosecution of Oscar Wilde had, as Hugh David argued, "changed the lives of British homosexuals more profoundly than anything else in the next three quarters of a century" (5).

Margaret Waley tells us vaguely that Arthur Waley's "make up would not have fitted him for an ordinary marriage" (18). He did enjoy a long and loving relationship with Beryl de Zoete, as Marian Ury makes abundantly clear, but he also appears to have maintained an interest in men.<sup>20</sup> The expression "love of comrades" employed in his Cambridge paper points strongly to the influence of the outspoken homosexual socialist Edward Carpenter (1844-1929), who was a close friend of Dalton's father (also homosexual), and who "greatly influenced" Keeling's socialism, according to Keith Hale (39; see pp: 136-9). Unlike Carpenter, however, I would argue that Waley's "illegitimate sexuality" becomes suppressed, "surreptitiously transferred," as Michel Foucault writes, into "clandestine, circumscribed, and coded types of discourse" (4). One of these coded types of discourse may be called 'Japan,' which since Wilde had become synonymous with Aestheticism, and a significant element or emblem of gay subcultures like Bloomsbury. Japan, after all, was only another part of Asia, and Asia in the European mind represents, as Said puts it, "sexual experience

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<sup>20</sup> A close friend of Arthur and Beryl's, Gerald Brenan, wrote in his Personal Record (1974), "there was something so ascetic about him [Arthur] and so erotically equivocal about her [Beryl] that many people believed there was no physical link between them" (94). Brenan also suggested that Waley was "a little in love" with his friend Sacheverell Sitwell" (98). Marian Ury in her "Notes Towards a Life of Beryl de Zoete" records the following: "As regards Arthur, more than one of my informants has suggested that there was a homosexual element in his makeup. The novelist Francis King thought of Waley as "fastidious, cerebral and (in my view) essentially homosexual," and recalls having once been introduced to a young "South American" man with whom, he was told, Waley had been in love (27). One of Ury's informants denied that Waley was homosexual but in the same letter noted that Waley was terrified of England's anti-homosexual laws.

unobtainable in Europe," but more particularly, "a different type of sexuality" (190).

It is commonly said that Bloomsbury was an "offshoot of the Aesthetic Movement," and Wilde was its gay hero, though to my knowledge this connection has not been extended to include japonisme (Reed 191). Yet under the influence of an orientalist discourse, Wilde and others deliberately constructed Japan and its art as decidedly non-masculine, the opposite of and a challenge to oppressive phallogentric/logocentric Western patriarchal culture and society. As mentioned in chapter one, Wilde derided Western art in explicitly gendered terms, labelling it "intellectual," as opposed to Japanese art which was "sensuous." "The aesthetic character of Japan renders it a suitable theater for the production of 'desire lite,'" writes Jeffrey Nunokawa of Wilde's japonisme, meaning that it hints at deeper, transgressive pleasures yet remains within the acceptable bounds of dominant heterosexual culture (53). Again, Japan here is not so much a place as a *state of mind*, a deliberate self-conscious creation, or appropriation, of Oscar Wilde.<sup>21</sup> As such, it becomes a site of resistance to all forms of established authority, including heterosexuality.

From the late nineteenth century, it became common to compare Japan with ancient Greece, and though such comparisons could be 'innocent,' frequently they were coded references to an analagous--and analogously ideal--homoerotic culture in Japan. "Greek settings," as Hermione Lee has written of Virginia Woolf's Jacob's Room (1922), "deliberately invoked late-Victorian Hellenism (so often a metaphor or a disguise for homosexuality)" (436-7).

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<sup>21</sup> The Near East had long been a site for actual homosexual "vacation cruises" (the phrase is Joseph Boone's), and while the Far East was obviously less accessible, from the late nineteenth century it too became a pilgrimage site for English homosexuals from Edward Carpenter and G. Lowes Dickinson, to Auden and Isherwood, Harold Acton, Peter Quennell and William Plomer. John Treat's recent book, Great Mirrors Shattered: Homosexuality, Orientalism, and Japan (1999), makes it clear that Japan continues to be an attractive 'vacation site' for American homosexuals.

"Greek studies operated as a 'homosexual code' during the great age of English university reform," adds Linda Dowling, "working invisibly to establish the grounds on which . . . 'homosexuality' would subsequently emerge as the locus of sexual identity for which . . . Walter Pater and Oscar Wilde are so often claimed as symbolic precursors" (xiii). So Waley's mentor and friend G. Lowes Dickinson, on his trip to Japan in 1913, was reminded "of what I suppose ancient Greece to have been. . . . The most Hellenic thing I ever saw was a group of Japanese youths practising jiu-jitsu naked under the trees of a temple garden, or by moonlight on the seashore" (64). Greece was also deliberately invoked by Edward Carpenter in his chapter on the samurai of Japan in Intermediate Types among Primitive Folk (1914): "the Samurai of Japan afford another instance of the part played by the Uranian love in a nation's life, and of its importance; and what we know of their institutions resembles in many respects those of the Dorian Greeks" (137). This point will be reiterated in chapter four; we need only note here that references to an imagined 'Hellenism' in Japan often signified homosexuality.

Wilde's "critiques of constituted authority," as Christopher Reed has written in a very useful article on Bloomsbury, "are central to twentieth-century thought--central, in particular, to the formation of the subcultural gay identity in which Roland Barthes was situated" (207). Reed mentions Barthes' "Death of the Author" and The Pleasure of the Text as important Wilde-influenced texts, though we can clearly witness Barthes' debt to both Wilde and orientalism in his Empire of Signs (1970). There Barthes 'invents' a "fictive nation" that he chooses to call "Japan," an obvious allusion to Wilde's "Decay of Lying" (3). This invented Japan signifies nothing, and is open therefore to limitless--Western--possibilities. In one chapter Barthes compares Western pinball with Japanese pachinko in strongly gendered terms about which there can be no mistake: "the

Western machine sustains a symbolism of penetration: the point is to possess, by a well-placed thrust, the pin-up girl who, all lit up on the panel of the machine, allures and waits. In pachinko, no sex," but the player is rewarded with a "voluptuous debacle of silver balls, which, all of a sudden, fill the player's hand" (28-9). Similarly, while the Western fork and knife violently "pierce" "cut" and "mutilate," Japanese chopsticks delicately "grasp," or "pinch . . . too strong a word, too aggressive" (15-8). Barthes' 'invention' called Japan thus undermines or circumscribes distastefully phallogentric Western categories, just as it did for Wilde.

Following Wilde, Bloomsbury began its own critiques of Western phallogentrism and patriarchy. Virginia Woolf's attacks, within an analogous feminist tradition, are evident in texts such as To the Lighthouse (1927), A Room of One's Own (1929), and Three Guineas (1938), and these might be contrasted with her embrace of Murasaki's, or Waley's, 'androgynous aesthetics' as depicted in his Tale of Genji (see chapter five). In this classical Japanese text heterosexual love is predominant, but there is at least one apparent reference to Genji's likely 'bisexuality,' and he is certainly presented *in English* as an alternative masculine hero; the love that dare not speak its name does, thus striking a blow for Bloomsbury against Victorian morality while remaining exquisitely tasteful, and justifying Wilde's (and Moore's) assertion of the primacy of aesthetics over ethics.

It might be argued that the samurai with their bushidô were surely vigorously masculine in a 'heterosexual' sort of way, but Western homosexuals, such as Edward Carpenter and the Bloomsbury associate William Plomer, were pleased to discover and report that homosexuality had long been a part of the Japanese warrior tradition, and was therefore "semi-respectable" (Alexander 138). We will examine this issue more closely in chapter four. Thus Japan becomes an

exotic effeminized site attractive not only for heterosexuals of the "Madame Butterfly" tradition; it also becomes especially desirable to an oppressed Western gay subculture ever on the lookout for 'coded types of discourse.'

In 1914 Arthur Schloss became Arthur Waley when his mother resumed her maiden name for herself and her sons because of the unpopularity of anything remotely German-sounding in England at the time. Waley's paternal grandfather, Sigismund Schloss (1813-1887), was a cotton broker in Manchester who was born in Frankfurt, Germany. Certainly because of the added distress of widespread anti-Semitism the less obvious name of Waley was preferable to Schloss. Though Waley himself, to my knowledge, never commented on the matter, L. P. Wilkinson in the obituary column of the King's College Annual Report for 1966 suggested that Waley himself had instigated the change when "he had been stalked by boy scouts, who alerted the police, and his name, together with unintelligible characters of the book he was reading, deepened the suspicion that he was a spy" (19). Wilkinson relates this incident in order to amuse, but it actually highlights my point that Arthur Schloss-Waley was often perceived by others as not-quite-English, an 'alien at home' in Reina Lewis' phrase. In spite of Waley's own silence on this issue, it is important; indeed, I believe Waley became an orientalist partly because he saw himself, and was seen, as a possible mediator between East and West: as an Anglo-Jew, he was already socially and culturally constructed as England's other.

Lewis's interesting book, Gendering Orientalism (1996) helps to explain this point. The Anglo-Jew has often been seen as a kind of mediator between East and West, "not quite not white," in Homi Bhabha's phrase, but sufficiently Oriental so as to be seen as a possible "envoy group of Europeans to the Orient; they count as aliens at home and Britons abroad," according to Lewis (216). Their particular



"usefulness," certainly as perceived by English politicians throughout the nineteenth century, was as 'ambassadors of goodwill,' promoting 'mutual understanding and good feeling' between British and Asian peoples. Thus they "were perceived to have very specific potential for England's imperial development" (Lewis 216). Further, "Jews as a race are constructed as a 'medium of transmission and understanding'" between East and West. "[B]ut the Jew, who does function as 'not quite not white,' is not the mimic man. The mimic man is a translator, a go-between, who looks native but thinks and feels English" (Lewis 217-8).<sup>22</sup> Viewed from this sharper critical perspective, it appears as if becoming an orientalist was less "strangely accidental" than Waley himself recalled (170 CP 3).

John Treat also suggests a connection between Waley's Jewishness and his orientalism. In his Great Mirrors Shattered: Homosexuality, Orientalism, and Japan (1999), Treat first discusses Lafcadio Hearn, who thought of himself as an oriental and felt he never fit in anywhere because of his mixed Greek-Irish background (153-6). Treat then asks,

Did Arthur Waley, born Arthur David Schloss in Tunbridge Wells to Jewish parents in 1889, fit in anywhere either? He once would have been called an Oriental, too. A privileged education and those Bloomsbury friends could not have made up for a family tree with roots far from the English soil he seldom left. What was it like, to stay so still and prosper where his people were newcomers? And to

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<sup>22</sup> Interestingly, the cultural construction of Jews as 'orientals' (i.e. non-European) and possible mediators between East and West took place simultaneously in Germany, where they were perceived to have "specific potential" for Germany's imperial development. Writers such as Martin Buber, Theodor Lessing and Lion Feuchtwanger, Ritchie Robertson points out, maintained that "the European nation with the closest affinity to Asia is Germany, because the Germans share Asia's metaphysical propensities," and the Jews were "uniquely placed to establish an era of co-operation between Europe and Asia" (188). These three writers also collapsed all Asian cultures, from Egypt to China (and even Japan in Lessing's case), into one great 'orient,' the antithesis of Europe (see Robertson 182-92).

dedicate himself to Oriental literatures, on whose pages were marked a myriad differences he transformed so well into the familiar? Waley told us little about his life, so we can only guess about that; and so other things, too. (157)<sup>23</sup>

Waley's 'people' were not quite newcomers, and Waley actually left England annually for the Continent, but Treat's point is otherwise well-taken. As a Jew in England, Waley was seen as an outsider, an oriental who did not easily 'fit in' to 'Anglo-Saxon' society. This was especially true in a time of extreme social prejudice. Indeed, I shall suggest here that Waley's Jewishness contributed to his "conscientious identification with victims" of imperialism and other atrocities. Waley himself is reported to have said that "anyone who could be indifferent to [British attacks on China during the Opium Wars] would also be indifferent to the atrocities of the Nazis" (Morris, "Genius" 80). Waley was not indifferent.

The Waleys were clearly a part of the British politico-economic establishment, as the beginning of this chapter makes clear, though there continued to run through that establishment a deep vein of prejudice and bigotry. Joseph Jacobs, for instance, reviewing in 1877 George Eliot's serially published Daniel Deronda, rightly accused Eliot's critics of harbouring a suppressed anti-Semitism:

No one can say that the fact of a man's being a Jew makes no more difference in other men's minds than if he were (say) a Wesleyan.

There remains a deep undercurrent of a prejudice against the Jew

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<sup>23</sup> Treat's closing remark in this passage hints at Waley's ambiguous sexuality. Treat says that Waley, like the orientalist Richard Burton, led a "separate domestic life" from his "wife" (Beryl), and poured himself "into great books . . . brought home as imperial booty. Is there something about being a translator that especially appeals to us homosexuals? . . . Foreign languages, clandestine codes, magic writing. Words, like some lives themselves, that never give up their secrets" (158-9). Waley and Beryl de Zoete were never married, and their relationship was certainly unconventional. In Waley's case, the translation of 'exotic' and erotic oriental literature, especially The Tale of Genji, can in fact be seen as displaced homoerotic desire, as I suggest in chapter five.

which conscientious Englishmen have often to fight against as part of that lower nature, a survival of the less perfect development of our ancestors, which impedes the Ascent of Man. (qtd. in Lewis 206)

Several more contemporary observers also described the pervasive atmosphere of anti-Semitism in Britain. George Orwell wrote candidly about it in The Road to Wigan Pier (1937), describing the situation as it was thirty years earlier, when Arthur Schloss would have been at school:

though anti-Semitism is sufficiently in evidence now, it is probably *less* prevalent in England than it was thirty years ago. It is true that anti-Semitism as a fully thought-out racial or religious doctrine has never flourished in England. There has never been much feeling against intermarriage, or against Jews taking a prominent part in public life. Nevertheless, thirty years ago it was accepted more or less as a law of Nature that a Jew was a figure of fun and--though superior in intelligence--slightly deficient in "character". In theory a Jew suffered from no legal disabilities, but in effect he was debarred from certain professions. . . . A Jewish boy at public school almost invariably had a bad time. He could, of course, live down his Jewishness if he was exceptionally charming or athletic, but it was an initial disability comparable to a stammer or a birthmark. Wealthy Jews tended to disguise themselves under aristocratic English or Scottish names . . .

(309-10)

Waley was in fact an old Norman name that meant 'foreigner.' Orwell goes on to note the "perceptible anti-Semitic strain in English literature from Chaucer . . . [through] Shakespeare, Smollet, Thackeray, Bernard Shaw, H. G. Wells, T. S. Eliot, Aldous Huxley, and various others" (311). We must also include here

Waley's 'friends' Rupert Brooke and Ezra Pound, the most virulently anti-Semitic of them all.<sup>24</sup>

The Bloomsbury member E. M. Forster also spoke out about prejudices in English society in his Two Cheers for Democracy (1951), identifying "Jew-consciousness" as one of the most insidious of them. Forster's discussion is carried through from the late 19th century to the end of World War Two:

. . . Jew-consciousness is in the air, and it remains to be seen how far it will succeed in poisoning it. . . . I know how the poison works, and I know too that if the average man is anyone in particular he is a preparatory-school boy. On the surface, things do not look too bad. Labour and Liberalism behave with their expected decency and denounce persecution, and respectability generally follows suit. But beneath the surface things are not so good, and anyone who keeps his ears open in railway carriages or pubs or country lanes can hear a very different story. . . . Jew-mania was the one evil which no one foretold at the close of the last war. All sorts of troubles were discerned and discernible - nationalism, class-warfare, the split between the haves and the have-nots, the general lowering of cultural values. But no prophet, so far as I know, had foreseen this anti-Jew horror, whereas today no one can see the end of it. (13-14)

But not every member of Bloomsbury or 'friend' of Waley was as tolerant as Forster. In an early essay entitled "The Differences between East and West," Keynes described the Jews as an Eastern people who, on account of "deep-rooted instincts that are antagonistic and therefore repulsive to the European," can never be assimilated to European civilization, since racial characteristics are

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<sup>24</sup> Pound's anti-Semitism is well known. Brooke's anti-Semitism, as well as his bisexuality, paranoia and antifeminism, are revealed in a forthcoming biography by Nigel Jones, Rupert Brooke: Life, Death and Myth (Metro Publishing.)

"unchanged by time and by revolution" (qtd. in Skidelsky 92). Similarly, Osbert Sitwell, one of Waley's closer friends, "insisted always that the Jews were members of a separate race, not merely of a separate faith, and regretted that they had been allowed 'to adopt European dress and ape European manners. Their life is one round of pretence, of pretending to be Europeans, Christians, Englishmen, English Gentlemen, Peers and Viceroy.'" (qtd. in Ziegler 112). The Jews, once again, are perceived as the other, only disguised as Englishmen and Europeans.

Robert Graves also recalled the climate of anti-Semitism in England at the beginning of the century. In his memoir Goodbye to All That (1929), he recounted his unhappy experiences at Charterhouse public school which he entered in the year 1909 and left a week before the outbreak of war:

The most unfortunate disability of all was that my name appeared on the school list as 'R. von R. Graves'. . . . Businessmen's sons, at this time, used to discuss hotly the threat, and even the necessity, of a trade war with the Reich. 'German' meant 'dirty German'. It meant: 'cheap, shoddy goods competing with our sterling industries.' It also meant military menace, Prussianism, useless philosophy, tedious scholarship, loving music and sabre-rattling. . . . Considerable anti-Jewish feeling worsened the situation: someone started the rumour that I was not only a German, but a German Jew. (38-9)

"Tedious scholarship" and "loving music" would almost seem to describe Waley. It did not matter that the Waleys had been English since the early eighteenth century (racial characteristics were unchanging, according to Keynes), or that "Arthur [as a boy] was an enthusiastic follower of Volunteer Manoeuvres on Wimbledon Common," as his younger brother Hugh recalled. The chant that the Schloss brothers heard at Collins's Music Hall in Islington was "'Courage!

When we've beaten the German and the Turk we all shall draw their wages while they do the dirty work!" (123; 127). That Hugh Waley recalled this schoolboy rhyme sixty years later is a good measure of its bitterness. "Turk" clearly carries with it centuries of linguistic and cultural baggage that was immediately understood by 'Anglo-Saxons'; it meant "Orientals, Jews and Muslims," who were, writes Said, "readily understandable in view of their primitive origins: this was (and to a certain extent still is) the cornerstone of modern Orientalism" (234). Said (293) cites a passage from Proust to illustrate how these categories were easily conflated in the European mind:

The Rumanians, the Egyptians, the Turks may hate the Jews. But in a French drawing-room the differences between those people are not so apparent, and an Israelite making his entry as though emerging from the heart of the desert, his body crouching like a hyaena's, his neck thrust obliquely forward, spreading himself in proud "salaams," completely satisfies a certain taste for the oriental. (Proust 214)

We may begin to see how and why Waley became a translator of 'oriental' literature, albeit the literature of the Far East. Just as Leonard Woolf's "development as a socialist," is said to have "stemmed, to an extent, from this early identification with Jews as victims," so too Waley made the conscientious identification with victims of imperialism with relative ease (Lee 300).

There is one last point that needs to be made concerning Waley's Jewish identity. Waley's reputation as a quiet, distant and austere intellectual whose silences were legend probably had less to do with "the enormous pain that he must have suffered as a result of his superior intellect and perfectionist ideals," as Perlmutter wrote, than with the enormous pain that he certainly suffered because of pervasive anti-Semitism in English society to which he was exposed over an entire lifetime (3-4). His intelligence was certainly exceptional, but

Waley associated with many of the most brilliant English intellectuals of his time, or of any time in British history, and was only one of a number of gifted men and women--individuals like Keynes, Roger Fry, Bertrand Russell, and the Woolfs. Moreover, it was mainly from the time of the First War, when prejudices were at their height, that Waley's reserve became noticeable.

The Compton-Burnett sisters recalled that in his student days Arthur Schloss had been an outgoing young man, very fond of music. Francis Watson agreed that "his later--and famous--silences" were not then in evidence (139). And Waley's good friend, Leonard Elmhirst, in a letter to Perlmutter, wrote as follows: "he was not at all an easy person to make human contact with. . . . His capacity to freeze people up reflected, I suspect, the suffering that he had gone through as a boy, and also at College, for being and looking a Jew."<sup>25</sup> His silence, his detachment, was therefore less an absorption in obscure Asian texts than it was a means of self-preservation in the presence of strangers who made him feel insecure. Again, Leonard Woolf, whose description of his own 'Jewish' characteristics immediately evokes Waley: ". . . thus it is we have learned that we

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<sup>25</sup> Leonard Elmhirst to Ruth Perlmutter, 9 August 1968. Leonard Elmhirst (1893-1974) studied under G. Lowes Dickinson at Cambridge from 1912-1915, and named Dickinson, G. B. Shaw and H. G. Wells as his heroes (Young 27). In 1921, Elmhirst met Rabindranath Tagore, who had "an influence upon his life second only to that of Dorothy [his wife]" (Young 63). Elmhirst became Tagore's personal secretary, and from 1921-1924, Director of the Institute of Rural Reconstruction at Visva-Bharati, a centre for the "study of the different cultures of the East" (Young 79). He also lectured on Tagore's behalf in China in 1923 (Hay 135). His future wife, Dorothy Straight (one of the richest women in the world, according to Young, 322), gave \$25,000 to Tagore's school, and remained a benefactor until 1947. It is uncertain when Waley first met the Elmhirsts, though their biographer, Michael Young, writes that Waley first went to Dartington in 1933, "and then again on many occasions. In 1941 he visited ten times in the year and not all for short periods" (209). Dartington Hall was established by the Elmhirsts in 1926 as an 'experimental school.' Young calls it a "utopian community," and describes it in 1982: "Dartington Hall Trust . . . owns a textile mill, a glass factory . . . a furniture and joinery works, a number of shops, a substantial share in a large building contractor, farms, woodlands, a horticultural department" and a college and school. The Trust . . . employs about 850 people. There are in addition nearly 300 students. . . . It owns 2,000 acres of farm and amenity land and 1,200 acres of woods. The annual turnover is about £14 million" (4). According to Young, Waley had a great influence on the Elmhirsts as he brought into their "stream of thought the influence of China" (210). Dorothy paid for the publication of Waley's The Way and its Power (1934), and Waley dedicated it to Leonard and Dorothy Elmhirst.

cannot escape Fate, because we cannot escape the past, the result of which is an internal passive resistance, a silent, unyielding self-control" (Journey 128). This is Waley exactly. Like Woolf, Waley employed "processes of self-concealment," and learned early in life "the need to keep his feelings hidden" (Lee 301). What outsiders interpreted as 'Bloomsbury' intellectual snobbery was really a painful sense of difference, or otherness, enforced upon him from without.

Because of a degenerative eye condition (conical cornea) that cost him all useful sight in one eye, and nearly his total vision, Waley was declared unfit for any form of military service, though Margaret Waley assures us he was never a conscientious objector (16). Waley spent the war in the British Museum cataloguing Chinese and Japanese art, teaching himself to read Chinese and Japanese, and translating Chinese and Japanese poetry. During these years he also greatly expanded the range and number of his acquaintances, particularly after he began to publish in 1916. Osbert Sitwell wrote in his Noble Essences (1950) that Waley had "perhaps the greatest range of friendship of any person I know, extending from dons to savants to spiritualists and members of Parliament, from his own kind, poets, painters, musicians, to those who practice Eskimo tricks in winter on the topmost slopes of mountain" (6). Evidently, Waley was not the "hermit Japanologist" that some made him out to be, even though he was an "intensely shy" man of few words.<sup>26</sup> Merely to list these names here would prove little, and the associations with which we are concerned will be discussed when necessary over the next three chapters.

A perusal of the hundreds of postcards in the Waley-de Zoete collection at Rutgers reveals that Waley's friends and connections were located not just in

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<sup>26</sup> Waley's nephew has described his uncle as "intensely shy, reticent and fastidious (and bore no resemblance to the person depicted or implied in Half of Two Lives" (the memoir of his widow, Alison Waley.) Letter to the author 22 May 1999. The expression "hermit Japanologist" was ascribed to Waley by Yukio Yashiro in his article, "Waley, The Hermit Japanologist." Bungei Shunjû, Dec. 1957: 112-19.



England but all over the world, particularly on the Continent where he spent his winters skiing and writing. But his home was always in Bloomsbury, physically and spiritually. Some observers do not include Waley in the Bloomsbury Group because he isn't mentioned by Leonard Woolf or Keynes in their memoirs; nor does he much figure in the letters and papers of Virginia Woolf or Roger Fry.<sup>27</sup> Waley's absence is partly explained by his age: he was nine years younger than L. Woolf and L. Strachey and twenty-three years younger than Fry. Even so, Waley was "a good friend" of Fry, according to the editor of Fry's letters, Denys Sutton, though Fry's letters to Waley "have not survived" (2: 757). Gerald Brenan recalled having often met at Fry's house "Bertrand Russell, Arthur Waley, Aldous Huxley and Kenneth Clark - all top-rank minds - as well as his [Fry's] old Cambridge friend Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson" (254). In an interview with a Greek newspaper in 1929, moreover, E. M. Forster included Waley along with L. Strachey, Keynes, V. Woolf and Roger Fry as members of "this society" who have in common "high intelligence, . . . spiritual integrity, great critical ability, economic independence, and liberal opinions" (qtd. in Rosenbaum 81).

My own reading of, as far as I know, all of the Bloomsbury memoirs, letters and diaries as well as memoirs and letters of people like the Sitwells, Raymond Mortimer, Peter Quennell, Harold Acton, Dora Carrington--just to mention a few--has revealed that Waley was indeed a younger member of the Bloomsbury Group and, for better or worse, was regarded as such by 'outsiders.' Pound certainly thought of Waley as Bloomsbury, whom he referred to hostilely as "Bloomsbuggers" (qtd. in Piggford 92). Peter Quennell, on the other hand, thought of Waley as one of the "distinguished Bloomsbury figures" who

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<sup>27</sup> Marian Ury wrote that "Waley was acquainted with Leonard and Virginia Woolf but was not really a 'Bloomsberry,' despite a common impression; his name does not appear anywhere in Leonard Woolf's memoirs" ("Imaginary" 273). Somewhat contradictorily, however, Ury also described Waley's Genji as "Bloomsbury propaganda for the cult of beauty" (Ury, Rev. of Murasaki's Genji 531).

occupied an important place in his life (155). Evelyn Waugh recorded in his diary in 1961 that speaking to "the old Bloomsbury sinologue" (Waley) brought back memories of "the voice of Bloomsbury" (786).

In this study I often refer to Bloomsbury collectively, as in 'Bloomsbury politics' or 'Bloomsbury attitudes.' This does not mean that I am unaware of the very different and complicated opinions and attitudes held by Bloomsbury members, nor that they were in many ways each other's fiercest critics. Yet, as I already have attempted to show, Bloomsbury members had much in common, and many of Waley's own attitudes--political, social, and sexual--were influenced by and sympathetic to this formidable "fraction" of British society.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> The term "fraction" was suggested by Raymond Williams in "The Bloomsbury Fraction." I have made use of the terms "social conscience" and [Bloomsbury's] "conscientious identification with victims" of imperialism from this essay. Williams' argument that a fraction performs a "service" for its class, promoting reform and "adaptations" that ultimately allow the persistence of class distinctions rather than the advancement of true social change also supports my own argument that Waley's political position was 'ambiguous' (163). Bloomsbury was "a true *fraction* of the existing English upper class," says Williams, "They were at once against its dominant ideas and values and still willingly, in all immediate ways, part of it. It is a very complex and delicate position" (156). An illustration of Williams' point is Waley at the British Museum (a state institution), cataloguing Chinese art and translating Chinese poetry--part of the imperialist project--and at the same time presenting this work as *English* modernism, in opposition to the 'bourgeois philistinism' of his class. Truly Waley's position was "complex and delicate," or ambiguous. Williams' views have not gone unchallenged, however: Patrick Brantlinger, for instance, argues that Williams has underestimated the level of commitment to feminism and pacifism of Virginia Woolf, as well as Leonard Woolf's dedication to anti-imperialism and internationalism. I do agree with Brantlinger that we cannot simply take the views of one Bloomsbury member and ascribe them to all the other members, as Williams does with some of the condescending comments of Clive Bell on "the lower-middle classes" (168). Bell's notion of a "mediocre mob" hostile to art (qtd. in Williams 168) is closer to the elitist modernism of Pound and Yeats, and Waley, I show in chapter four, challenged that elitism.

## CHAPTER THREE

### The Spirit of Waley in Japanese Poetry

The claim of Japan to possess civilization has been slowly and grudgingly admitted by the Western world. Now that on battlefields marked by slaughter on a vast scale she has defeated a great European Power, the peoples of Europe have grown less critical of her credentials, and incline to surmise that, after all, this singular nation, secluded for so long from the rest of the world, may be only a little behind themselves in refinement and humanity. We have already begun to take a different and more serious view of the art of Japan than that which prevailed a decade or two ago; and now even her poetry may come to be studied with respect . . .

("Japanese Poetry" Living Age (1910): 742)

In a review of the first volume of Edwin Cranston's Waka Anthology, The Gem-Glistening Cup (1993), the renowned Japanologist, Earl Miner, while acknowledging that "foreign study of waka [Japanese poetry] can be traced back to origins in the last century," maintains that the "modern study of waka as central to a recognized field of study derives from the United States: from Donald Keene's *Anthology of Japanese Literature*, 1955." Before Keene's collection, "there really was no 'field' of Japanese literature," continues Miner, and "most people (the publisher probably included) doubted whether there was a Japanese literature that could, or would, be read and taught" (117).

If Miner was thinking of Japanese literature studies in a western university setting then his argument overlooks the development of institutionalized Japanese language and literature studies at SOAS in London from 1917, and especially since 1947 (see Phillips). One can also think of pioneering individuals like Frederick Dickins (1838-1915), Reader in Japanese at Bristol University, who translated the Hyakunin isshu in 1865 and selections from the Man'yôshû in 1906; Johann Joseph Hoffmann (1805-78), professor of Japanese studies at the

University of Leiden from 1855 to 1863, and one of the first professors of Japanese in Europe; Leon de Rosny (1837-1916), first professor of Japanese at L'École des Langues Orientales from 1868, whose Anthologie Japonaise (1871) contains translations from the Man'yôshû and the Kokinshû (Kornicki, "Aston" 69); Karl Florenz (1865-1933), who "introduced Japanese literature to the German reading public," and whose Ph.D., obtained from the University of Tokyo, was on the commentaries on the early part of the Nihon Shoki (Inada, "Translators" 146).

Miner also disregards the non-professional though, I would argue, quite institutionalized, studies in waka and other Japanese literature that took place through the auspices of the Asiatic Society of Japan and the Japan Society of London: Basil Hall Chamberlain's Classical Poetry of the Japanese (1880) and Kojiki (1882); also, William Aston's Nihongi (Nihon Shoki, 1896) and History of Japanese Literature (1899). Hide Ikehara Inada in his Bibliography of Translations from the Japanese also credits August Pfizmaier with 41 different translations from Japanese literature into German between 1847 and 1884, including translations from the Makura no sôshi, Ise monogatari, and the Man'yôshû. Evidently there *were* people who felt that Japanese literature could, and would, be read and taught.

The field of Japanese studies was formed in Europe in the Meiji period when Europe, as Said says, "dominated intellectual horizons in the East by virtue of [its] prominence and wealth" though it was formed when Japan was just emerging onto the world stage, and was less politically and economically important to the West than it is now to the United States (323). Early European scholarship has been superannuated, and the texts cited above do not compare in depth and complexity to modern-day studies--many of them reveal more about the period and their authors than their purported subjects--though P. F. Kornicki notes that Aston's Nihongi is still in use ("Aston" 75). Yet, "however humble it

may be," says Inada, the translators mentioned above are among those who "laid the foundations for today's scholarship in Japanese studies" ("Translators" 159). Keene himself dedicated his Anthology to Arthur Waley, a late pioneer in the field of Japanese translation.

Waley's Japanese Poetry: The Uta appeared in 1919, between the nineteenth century European and modern American 'periods' of Japanese studies.<sup>29</sup> He had two aims in this book: one was to provide an educational tool for the new field of Japanese Studies in England that was inaugurated with the establishment in 1917 of the London School of Oriental Studies. For Japanese Poetry is not only a translation, it is also a grammar and dictionary of classical Japanese, the application to a new and unfamiliar language the techniques of philology acquired in a classical education at Cambridge. It was, Waley wrote, "chiefly intended to facilitate the study of the Japanese text" (JP 8). Most commentators, however, disregarding Waley's design, have tended to read Japanese Poetry only as Japanese poetry in English, to be enjoyed (or not) as poetry. No one has believed Waley that "a few months should suffice for the mastering" of classical Japanese, and not one of Waley's acquaintances, to my knowledge, undertook its arduous study (JP 8). Who then was Japanese Poetry intended for? What need had the market for such an extraordinary educational tool? The first part of this chapter attempts to answer these questions.

Waley's other aim was to challenge the uncritical admiration for Japanese things, and Japanese poetry in particular, that was held by most of Waley's modernist contemporaries who were being influenced by the eccentric and unreliable views of Yone Noguchi. Certainly one of the most surprising features of Japanese Poetry is the author's coolness towards his subject. It is most apparent in the Introduction that Waley was less than enthusiastic about

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<sup>29</sup> Parenthetical references to Waley's Japanese Poetry in this chapter are abbreviated as JP.

Japanese poetry; or rather, we might say that his unimpassioned approach, what I am calling the spirit of Waley, appears striking in an age when Japanese cultural products were received with almost complete indiscriminating adulation. The second part of this chapter compares Waley's attitudes towards Japanese poetry with those of Noguchi. Since one recent critic has claimed that Noguchi "played the most important role in modern times as a poet and interpreter of the divergent cultures of the East and West," an opinion with which I do not agree, I will dwell for some time on Noguchi's views before returning to those of Waley (Hakutani 17).

Before discussing the place of Waley's Japanese Poetry in a new institution of Japanese studies in England it is necessary to retrace some of the steps which led to the establishment of this institution. I mentioned in chapter one that a deputation from the Japan Society to the British Prime Minister was one of the initiatives which lead to the appointment of a Departmental Committee to consider the establishment of an institution "for the purpose of instruction in Oriental languages." The chairman of that committee was Evelyn Baring--Lord Cromer--England's viceroy of Egypt from 1882, the year England occupied Egypt, to 1907. Cromer had been "Egypt's master," and was sometimes referred to as "Over-baring." His philosophy concerning Asia and Asians was straightforward and is thus summed up by Said: "knowledge of subject races or Orientals is what makes their management easy and profitable; knowledge gives power, more power requires more knowledge, and so on in an increasingly profitable dialectic of information and control" (35-6).

Another key member of the Committee was the former viceroy of India, Lord Curzon (1859-1925), who was likened by Cromer to Cicero. In his introduction to a collection of Curzon's speeches and writings, Cromer quotes

Curzon "addressing the youths who year by year issue forth . . . from our schools and colleges with the honour and reputation of England in their keeping":

Wherever unknown lands are waiting to be opened up, wherever the secrets or treasures of the earth are waiting to be wrested from her, wherever peoples are lying in backwardness or barbarism, wherever new civilizations are capable of being planted or old civilizations of being revived, wherever ignorance or superstition is rampant, wherever enlightenment and progress are possible, wherever duty and self-sacrifice call--there is, as there has been for hundreds of years, the true summons of the Anglo-Saxon race. (xxii)<sup>30</sup>

We have a good idea which graduating youths attended to this pitch of rhetoric because Curzon in 1907 was elected both chancellor of Oxford University and Lord Rector of Glasgow University, posts that he held until the outbreak of war. The many youths he addressed between 1907 and 1914 became the men who would die when "duty and self-sacrifice" came to call.

Curzon's speeches on the subject of "Oriental Studies" are perhaps the most emphatic declaration of the imperial importance of training scholars and translators. Unlike Cromer, who is principally preoccupied with the recently conquered Near East, Curzon's far-reaching sense of geography already comprehends the furthest extent of the Eurasian continent. In this speech delivered to the House of Lords in 1909, he advances easily from the suggestion that "our familiarity, not merely with the languages of the peoples of the East but with their customs, their feelings, their traditions, their history and religion, our capacity to understand what may be called the genius of the East, is the sole basis upon which we are likely to be able to maintain in the future *the position we*

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<sup>30</sup> I quote directly from Curzon's Subjects of the Day, though I am indebted to Said's Orientalism for drawing my attention to this work.

*have won*," to the assertion that only such knowledge would secure Britain's challenged position in territories not yet won:

A good deal of the discussion has turned upon . . . the facilities that are required in China, Japan, and Korea, and the countries of the far East. . . . In my travels in Asia, from Yokohama in the East to Bagdad in the West, I have been struck with mingled admiration and dismay at the success which is attending German efforts at the expense of our own, largely owing to the indomitable industry and the command of native languages possessed by the clerks and assistants, and, indeed, most of the members of that great nation. (184-5; emphasis added)

Thus with characteristic eloquence and persuasiveness does Curzon guide his powerful and influential audience on a tour through the Empire, present and future, from Bagdad in the West to Yokohama in the East. It is clear that Japan, as mentioned in chapter one, had fallen into the vast sphere of British hegemony.

Curzon could speak authoritatively about all of Asia because he had travelled there many times between 1887 and 1895, the period of his "great journeyings" around the world, what Harold Nicolson in the Dictionary of National Biography called "deliberate voyages of information," one of which took place in 1887-88: "Canada, Chicago, Salt Lake City, San Francisco, Japan, Shanghai, Foochow, Hong-Kong, Canton, Singapore, Ceylon, Madras, Calcutta, Darjeeling, Benares, Agra, Delhi, Peshawar, Khyber Pass." Curzon had seen "the futility of French administration in Cochin China," and was emotionally stirred by their "encroachments in Siam"; he had urged that the German occupation of Kiao-chow in 1897 would result in a Russian occupation of Port Arthur and a war, a war in which he prophetically argued Britain should take the part of the Japanese (Nicolson 224-5). These issues and others were discussed in the books that were the outcome of his travels and which established his reputation as a



leading authority on Asia: Russia in Central Asia (1889), Persia and the Persian Question (1892), and Problems of the Far East (1894). Certainly by the time that he gave his decisive speech at a Mansion House conference in 1914, Curzon was undoubtedly the most powerful politician-orientalist in the movement for a school of oriental studies. At the outset of the speech he is addressing the mayor of London, Sir Marcus Samuel, who had close business ties with Japan: "You, my Lord Mayor, said truly just now that this is a movement to place Great Britain in the same position with regard to the countries in the East, which we either administer or with which we have relations of diplomacy or trade, that is occupied by foreign continental powers" (188). To Samuel, better knowledge of Asia meant better business, but to Curzon such knowledge was "a great Imperial obligation. In my view the creation of a school like this in London is part of the necessary furniture of Empire." The study of oriental languages was "the highest responsibility that can be placed upon the shoulders of Englishmen," since "there is a gap in our national equipment which ought emphatically to be filled, and those [who] take their part in filling that gap, will be rendering a patriotic duty to the Empire and promoting the cause and goodwill among mankind." (191-2)

The School of Oriental Studies was opened for business on the 18th of January, 1917. Proceedings of the opening ceremony on 23 February were published in the first Bulletin, which included speeches by Curzon and King George V, introductory words of the first Director, Denison Ross, and translations of Chinese poems by Arthur Waley. Curzon reiterated his hope that "we shall not be behind those rivals or those enemies in our equipment for that which is an essential part of the duty of Empire." The King expressed his hope that the School "will serve to develop the sympathy which already so happily exists between my subjects and those of my Far Eastern Ally, Japan" (qtd. in Hartog 27-9). The School was soon "holding large classes of men from the

Admiralty and the War Office" as there was a "need for interpreters for the war in the East" (Ross, Both Ends of the Candle 168). Though the immediate need was for knowledge of "living Oriental languages," the Reay Committee had also argued for the importance of "classical Oriental studies" (Hartog 12). Ross underlined the point that "the encouragement of the amateur of Oriental subjects must be one of the important features of this School" ("Intro." 2). He may well have had Waley in mind, for they had been friends and colleagues at the British Museum when Ross was Keeper of the Stein Antiquities. Waley was among those who sent Ross congratulations upon his appointment in 1916 to the post of Director of the School, and Ross later edited the Broadway Travellers series of texts which included Waley's Travels of an Alchemist (1931; Both Ends 171). It is precisely at this moment that Waley in the Museum was busily studying Chinese and Japanese and preparing his classical Japanese grammar; declared unfit for active duty, he was helping to fill the "gap in our national equipment" by interpreting poems inscribed on Chinese and Japanese prints and paintings. His translations of Chinese poems appeared in the first Bulletin, about which C. H. Philips wrote, "if for no other reason this first issue of the *Bulletin* therefore deserved fame because it provided the vehicle for the first of Waley's many elegant, vital, and lucid translations" (vii). His early work in Japanese was reserved for the publication of Japanese Poetry.

The publication of Waley's A Hundred and Seventy Chinese Poems in 1918 attracted widespread attention. More Translations from the Chinese, which appeared the following year, was called by one reviewer "one of the most memorable books in recent years" (qtd. in Johns, "Waley" 17). Cyril Connolly listed "Waley's Chinese poems" in his journal among select works of literature "indispensable" to "Civilization" (197-8). Thus, Waley's reputation as a translator and an English poet was secured. It was with some disappointment,

then, that Japanese Poetry was received. The reviewer in the Times claimed that the Japanese poems "do not give the same thrill as those little decorative masterpieces--the Chinese translations. . . . One labels them sentimental and derivative . . . But one is not very much interested in delicacy and simplicity as such." Jun Fujita in Poetry thought the Japanese poem in Waley had "completely lost its original identity" (286), while Minoru Toyoda some years later argued that Waley lacked "a deep insight into the intellectual as well as the spiritual life of a nation of which [he] is not a member" (461). This last charge is more complicated, and we will take it up below as part of the reason for Waley's unsentimentality towards Japanese poetry. Of contemporary reviewers, only Babette Deutsch of the Dial (New York), to my knowledge, saw in Waley what was not in Chamberlain, Aston, Dickins or Porter, namely, the unmistakable tone of modernity: "Japanese poetry is utterly distinct from the sick languors of the eighteen-nineties. It is crisp and terse, rich and brief. *Weltschmerz* is heavier when it goes half-uttered. Beauty, like music and fragrance, is sharpest when it is passing" (207). Passing beauty was certainly a suitable post-war theme, conveyed by Waley in a distinctly post-war sound, in spite of any unsavoury "delicacy and simplicity."

But all of these reviewers had read Japanese Poetry as English poetry, and in the light of the earlier translations from the Chinese, virtually ignoring Waley's design and the context in which Japanese Poetry had appeared. That context was the establishment of SOAS, and the paucity of instructional materials in classical Japanese. For Japanese Poetry is a simple grammar, complete with a brief introduction, notes on grammar, and a dictionary. The translations are not presented as English poetry but as guides to the translation of Japanese. Consider this example of number 542 from the Kokinshû, with which I include Waley's grammatical notes (JP 60):

Kokin 542

ANON.

- |                             |                                      |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 <i>Haru tateba</i>        | 2 Like the ice which melts           |
| 2 <i>Kiyuru kôri no,</i>    | 1 When spring begins                 |
| 3 <i>Nokori naku</i>        | 3 Not leaving a trace behind         |
| 4 <i>Kimi ga kokoro mo</i>  | 4, 5 May your heart melt towards me! |
| 5 <i>Ware ni toke-namu!</i> |                                      |

*no* = *no gotoku*. The *Nokori naku* really goes with what follows.

*-namu* is here the indeclinable particle which, attached to the Fut. and Neg. Form, expresses a wish. cf. p. 64

Or this example of a poem by Hitomaro from the Man'yôshû (JP 41):

1879

HITOMARO

- |                              |                                       |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 <i>Kasugu no ni</i>        | 1 On the moors of Kasuga              |
| 2 <i>Keburi tatsu miyu</i>   | 2 The rising smoke is visible         |
| 3 <i>Otome-ra shi</i>        | 3 The women surely                    |
| 4 <i>Haru no no uwagi</i>    | 4, 5 Must have plucked lettuce on the |
| 5 <i>Tsumite ni-rashi mo</i> | spring moor and must be boiling       |
|                              | them                                  |

*-ra* is a plural-ending. *-rashi* (see p. 14) is added to the Conclusive Form, except occasionally in verbs conjugated like *miru* (of which *niru* 'to boil' is one); the form *arashi* for *arurashi* is also found.  
cf. *-kerashi* from *-keri*, p. 68.

It is obvious that Waley is not addressing himself to readers of the London Times or Babette Deutsch of the Dial but to potential students of Japanese.

Virtually every poem comes equipped with these numbers and notes to assist the student in learning the language and making some attempt to translate it. There is every reason to believe, therefore, that Waley was quite serious when he stated, in a now-famous remark, that since classical Japanese "has an easy grammar and limited vocabulary, a few months should suffice for the mastering of it" (JP 8).

And yet English readers have tended to focus only on the English translation, ignoring Waley's careful instruction. Only Jun Fujita, so far as I can tell, recognized and commended this aspect of the book. The primary value of Japanese Poetry, he wrote, was as an educational tool: "he makes a strenuous grammatical study of the poems and inserts foot-notes which may assist students. Besides this, one chapter is devoted to notes on grammar, which are as accurate as in a Japanese text. . . . the value of this book can never be over-estimated" (286-7). More recently Phillip Harries, who has written an article on Waley for Hugh Cortazzi's Britain and Japan (1991), has also suspected that in Japanese Poetry "Waley was making little attempt to create fresh literature": "the whole tone and presentation of *Japanese Poetry: The Uta* is that of a primer or book of instruction." Yet rather than pursue this suspicion Harries can only conclude that "the poems as a whole do indeed fall short of the ones he translated from Chinese, lacking their power, conviction and integrity" (216-7).

Waley was writing for potential students of Japanese and thereby fulfilling an imperial demand that had been emphatically stated by leaders like Curzon and Ross, yet he was also establishing his own position in the small though clearly defined field of Japanese studies in Europe. The scholars mentioned in the bibliography of Japanese Poetry were selected carefully and deliberately by Waley: they are more or less the only other sources available to European readers who, he presumes, had at least a command of English, French and German. On the other hand, he quite deliberately excluded a considerable body of literary 'translations' from the Japanese that were popular at the time: there is no Moons of Nippon, by Edna Underwood; no Master-Singers of Japan, by Clara Walsh; no Crown Imperial, by Unkichi Kawai; no Yone Noguchi and no Lafcadio Hearn.

This is not to say that Waley necessarily likes the scholars he includes, or that he did not have his own agenda. He is particularly severe on the German

scholars Rudolf Lange and August Pfizmaier. He dismisses Lange's translations from the *Kokinshû* as "a version in elegiac couplets which have neither the elegance of verse nor the fidelity of prose." He has this to say of Pfizmaier, also in fairly small print:

Pfizmaier had apparently no knowledge of Japanese Grammar. There is hardly a line in the book that does not contain a blunder. It is unfortunate that Winkler should have based his *Uralaltaischer Sprachstamm* (1909) on this work. Because Pfizmaier translates the adverb *-beku* as though it were the conclusive *-beshi*, Winkler infers that a verb *beku* (1st conj.) once existed and correlates it with the Finnish *veg*! (IP 15)

Clearly, Waley is addressing himself here not to the London literati but to other specialists in the field. We must also bear in mind that the First War with Germany had just ended, but the war against other European powers to establish pre-eminence in orientalism was very much alive; Curzon had located the enemy at "Paris, at Petrograd, and--if I may say it with bated breath--at Berlin" (qtd. in Hartog 29).

Of course Waley had his own bones to pick with the English Victorians, and his terse appraisal of Chamberlain is 'classic Waley': "Very free verse translations from the *Manyô* and *Kokin*, in this style:

I muse on the old-world story,  
As the boats glide to and fro,  
Of the fisher-boy Urashima,  
Who a-fishing lov'd to go." (IP 16)

Subtle, but decisive. By locating Chamberlain within an outmoded pre-modern lyric tradition, Waley thus condemns him, indicating that he saw himself and his audience as distinctly Modern.

As Denison Ross said, "he [Waley] always gives the impression of saying the final word on any subject. Though intolerant of humbug, he never says a bitter thing, but allows you to draw your conclusions negatively" (Both Ends 264-5). True enough for Chamberlain, but Waley's critical remarks could actually be quite bitter, even arrogant at times, such as in this comment on Japan's earliest recorded poetry contained in the Kojiki and the Nihon shoki: "of the two hundred and thirty-five poems contained in these two chronicles, not one is of any literary value" (JP 5). This had also been Aston's opinion, but coming from a new scholar in his first publication on Japanese literature, such a sweeping dismissal was audacious to say the least. Interestingly, Haruo Shirane notes in his review of The Gem-Glistening Cup that "most poetry anthologies . . . begin with the early poems in the *Man'yôshû*," (as does Waley's), and Cranston's appears to be one of the first to begin with the "ancient songs" of the Nihon shoki and the Kojiki. Shirane's comment on this matter is worth quoting in full:

. . . this is the first time that the "ancient songs" have been given such prominence and careful attention within this kind of context, and in this regard the *Waka Anthology* will probably alter the perception of early Japanese poetry for the general reader and stir more poetic interest among Western scholars in the early chronicles, which have been primarily treated from the point of view of religion, socio-political history, and myth. The reader accustomed to only *Man'yôshû* or Heian court poetry will be surprised at the vigor and variety of the language, rhythm, and imagery, which includes considerable eroticism and violence. (419-20)

It is difficult to know the extent to which, if at all, Waley's negative opinion of the literary value of these earlier texts had any influence on Western scholars

before Cranston; but we can know, at any rate, that influential as he was Waley did not have the final word on every subject.

Waley is also pointedly negative about another well-known collection of Japanese poetry. The Hyakunin isshu had appeared in three different complete English versions, translated by Frederick Dickins (1865), Clay MacCauley (1899), and William Porter (1909), though Waley, apparently, could not understand why:

... it is chiefly through translations of yet another anthology, the *Hyakunin isshu*, that Japanese poetry is known to English readers. This collection of a 'Hundred Poems by a Hundred Poets' was made c 1235 A. D. It is so selected as to display the least pleasing features of Japanese poetry. Artificialities of every kind abound, and the choice does little credit to the taste of Sada-iye to whom the compilation is attributed.

These poems have gained an unmerited circulation in Japan, owing to the fact they are used in a kind of 'Happy Families' card-game. (JP 7)

Waley was referring to hyakunin isshu karuta (hyakunin isshu playing cards), a game played to this day at New Year's in Japan which involves matching the upper (kami no ku) and lower (shimo no ku) hemistichs of one of the hundred poems. The "unmerited circulation" of the hyakunin isshu, however, may be more due to the fact that from the late nineteenth century Japanese high school students have had to commit many of the poems--and sometimes the entire collection--to memory. Again, Waley's opinion is his own, and a recent scholarly translation (1996) by Joshua Mostow of the poems in the Hyakunin isshu together with commentaries and specific pictorial images inspired by the poems goes a long way towards affirming that Waley understood less than his confidence warranted.

If Waley was critical about his collections of Japanese poetry, he was also fastidious about his forms. Unlike most of his English predecessors, he did not



like chôka (naga-uta, or "long poems"). Dickins, for instance, had held that the chôka of the Nara period "once promised much for the future of Japanese poetry," and proceeded to translate 263 of them in his Primitive and Mediaeval Japanese Texts (1906, ix-x). According to Aston, "some of the best poetry which Japan has produced is in this metre" (History 30). But Waley felt that "the *naga-uta*, 'Long-Songs' of the *Manyô* . . . were an unsuccessful experiment. The Japanese poets quickly realized that they had no genius for extended composition, and after the eighth century the *naga-uta* practically disappears. I have only found three 'long-songs' which seemed to me worth including" (JP 6). This particular comment aroused the indignation of Fujita, who pointed out that Waley had "overlooked the *jorori* (sic), *biwa-uta*, and the *Nô* plays," and alleged that "long compositions were distasteful to the Japanese poets" (284). In the introduction, however, Waley had specifically referred to "the poetry of the *Nô* Plays" which he hoped to translate in the near future (JP 8). His Nô Plays of Japan was completed the following year, and published in 1921.

So far it does not appear as though Japanese Poetry is very enthusiastic about Japanese poetry. There are three possible reasons for Waley's dispassion, the first being that he saw the difficulty in translating into elegant English a poetic form which, though containing just 31 syllables in the original, abounds in virtually untranslatable puns, particularly the kake-kotoba, "pivot-word," and the makura-kotoba, "pillow-word." The pivot-word--a single word from which two meanings have to be extracted--Waley considers "remarkable and deserv[ing of] special mention," yet "no examples [are] found in the poems [he] translated." He also maintained that "Japanese poetry can only be rightly enjoyed in the original" (JP 8), an opinion with which at least Fujita was inclined to agree (286). Moreover, while his Chinese translations are presented as English poetry, without the originals, in Japanese Poetry originals appear in romanized Japanese

beside tentative English versions, as we have seen, for purposes of comparison. Waley was clearly offering Japanese poetry to students "who wish to pursue this study further" (JP 8).

A second reason for Waley's evident lack of enthusiasm for Japanese poetry is also related to Chinese poetry. In a revised introduction (1960) to his Hundred and Seventy Chinese Poems (1918), he explained what he thought was the reason for the popularity of his Chinese translations. Chinese poetry, he said,

mainly deals with the concrete and particular, with things one can touch and see--a beautiful tree or lovely person--and not with abstract conceptions such as Beauty and Love. The English upper class, on the other hand, brought up at the universities in a tradition inspired by Plato, has reconciled itself to abstractions and even to the belief that the general is, in some mysterious way, truer and nobler than the particular. But ordinary people in England have very little use for abstractions and when poetry, under the influence of the higher education, becomes abstract, it bores them. (7)

This is rather patronizing, as Waley's class and education, as much as he is trying here to distance himself from them, places him inevitably apart from the "ordinary people" whose tastes he presumes to know and who, he surmises, are bored by the abstract. But it is by and large true that at least Heian court poetry tends to be more limited in its range of subjects than Chinese poetry; beauty and love are its central themes. Chinese poetry is not only greater in its range of subjects, it also tends to address itself more to general readers than to select individuals. A story that appealed to Waley about his favorite Chinese poet, Po Chü-i, was that Po Chü-i "was in the habit of reading his poems to an old peasant woman and altering any expression which she could not understand" (170 CP 87).

Such a scene would surely have appealed to Yeats, but it is quite unimaginable of the aristocratic poets of the Man'yôshû and Kokinshû.

Waley's Japanese Poetry did not cause a sensation as did his translations from the Chinese. It was not until 1946 that a second impression was issued, while by the same year twelve impressions of A Hundred and Seventy Chinese Poems had appeared (Johns 13, 21). Yet in 1938 Solon Alberti set four of the translations--Numbers 744 and 778 from the Man'yôshû and numbers 158 and 525 from the Kokinshû--to music for piano and voice in Four Sketches from the Far East. It is not certain where and when these sketches were performed or what impression they might have made on listeners, but as the selections were all love poems, I suspect that they were intended as personal expressions of love by Alberti for someone. In Waley's version, Man'yôshû number 744 appears to have been written by Ôtomo no Yakamochi (a man) to another man:

<i>Yû sareba</i>	When evening comes
<i>Yado ake-makete</i>	I will leave the door open beforehand
<i>Ware matamu:</i>	and (then) wait
<i>Yume ni ai-mi ni</i>	For him who said he would come
<i>Komu o iu hito wo.</i>	To meet me in my dreams. (JP 31)

Although Japanese male poets often assumed a female voice in their love poems, this particular poem is not marked for gender in the original, while in Waley's version the sex of the beloved is clearly indicated. More significantly, in the kotoba-gaki (headnotes) to the Man'yôshû that Waley undoubtedly had before him, it expressly states that this and fourteen other poems were written by Yakamochi to his mistress, Sakanoe no Ôkiiratsume (Honda 62-3).<sup>31</sup> Waley's "mistake" was too obvious not to have been deliberate, and shows the extent to

<sup>31</sup> Heihachirô Honda in 1967 translated the poem as follows: "With my doors unshut I wait / that you may come into my dreams" (63).

which faithful translation was less important to him than making Asian literature his own. "Cross-writing" can be a strategy of manipulating genders, in particular by switching pronouns, for the purpose of either concealing or creating homoeroticism. We will also see instances of cross-writing in Waley's Nô Plays and in The Tale of Genji in the following chapters.

1938 was not a very good year to sing Japanese love poetry in Britain, at least not publicly, but one important modern poet continued to sing the praises of the Japanese. W. B. Yeats's late poem "Imitated from the Japanese" (1938) was reshaped to the extent that it is difficult to see what, if anything, it imitates, though the likely source was Ariwara no Narihira's famous poem from the Ise Monogatari, also collected in the Kokinshû and translated thus by Waley:

<i>Tsuki ya aranu:</i>	Can it be that there is no moon
<i>Haru ya mukashi no</i>	And that the spring is not
<i>Haru naranu,</i>	The spring of old
<i>Waga mi hitotsu wa</i>	While I alone remain
<i>Moto no mi ni shite?</i>	The same person? (IP 65)

Yeats's poem is personalized, and borrows only the spirit of the original:

A most astonishing thing  
 Seventy years have I lived;  
 (Hurrah for the flowers of Spring  
 For Spring is here again.)  
 Seventy years have I lived  
 No ragged beggar man,  
 Seventy years have I lived,  
 Seventy years man and boy,  
 And never have I danced for joy. (Poems 295-6)<sup>32</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Earl Miner said in his Japanese Tradition in British and North American Literature (1958) that Yeats had got his inspiration from Pound's translation of the No play Kakitsubata, which features the poem by Narihira. Pound's very loose translation, however, is sufficiently unlike either Waley or Yeats as to make this issue debatable:

A closer correspondence can be made between one of Yeats's shortest poems, "A Meditation in Time of War," written just after Waley's volume appeared and published in Michael Robartes and the Dancer (1921), and this waka by the Buddhist priest Saigyô Hôshi. I have set Waley's translation (left) beside Yeats, omitting the Japanese original:

Since I am convinced	For one throb of the artery
That Reality is in no way	While on that grey stone I sat
Real,	Under the old wind-broken tree,
How am I to admit	I knew that One is animate,
That dreams are dreams?	Mankind inanimate phantasy.
( <u>JP</u> 100)	( <u>Poems</u> 190)

The intensity of vision concentrated on a single thought, the five-line structure, and the familiar Buddhistic inversion of dream/reality (animate/inanimate phantasy in Yeats) suggest this possible Japanese source in Waley's translation.

The third reason for Waley's dispassion towards Japanese poetry is connected to Minoru Toyoda's remark cited above that one needs to *be* Japanese in order to really comprehend and therefore truly appreciate Japanese poetry.

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The spring  
Is not the spring of the old days,  
My body  
Is not my body,  
But only a body grown old.

Narihira, Narihira,  
My glory comes not again. (Classic Noh 129)

Yeats knew Waley well, and often consulted him on questions of orientalism. They had mutual friends in Laurence Binyon, Edmund Dulac, and Pound. As Richard Ellmann wrote, "A little school of devotees of the Noh plays grew up in London, including Pound, Yeats, Arthur Waley, and Edmund Dulac" (213). John Hatcher adds to this group Binyon, Charles Ricketts, and Gordon Bottomley (76). Yoko Chiba shows that Yeats first became interested in Zen through the influence of Waley's "Zen Buddhism and its Relation to Art" (1922), well before the appearance in 1927 of Diasetz Suzuki's Essays in Zen Buddhism (201-3; 330-1). Many of Waley's works--including Japanese Poetry, The Nô Plays of Japan, An Introduction to the Study of Chinese Painting, and The Tale of Genji--were in Yeats's library (see Edward O'Shea's Descriptive Catalogue of W.B. Yeats's Library. New York: Garland, 1985.) For Yeats's comment on Waley's Genji, see chapter five, p. 159.

Whereas Waley would see poetry, or classical Japanese, as one language with a vocabulary and a set of structural and grammatical rules capable of being rationally analysed and paraphrased by anyone with time and intelligence--this is an important point of Japanese Poetry--Toyoda evidently sees poetry more as a symbolist esoteric essence, a kind of secret code for the initiated few, in this case the Japanese: ". . . in the case of poetry . . . translation is not a mere matter of language" (461). What is it then? It is, declares Toyoda, "being able to understand the Japanese feeling" for things like autumn, which is "very different from the mood of the season" embodied by European poets (463). Since the European poet cannot understand this Japanese feeling, the "possibility . . . of literary translation between . . . Japanese and English may naturally be open to doubt" (461).

What Toyoda was touching on here in 1934 is a complex and deep-rooted idea that can be traced back to Tokugawa nativism of the early eighteenth century. "Nativism," or the kokugaku movement, was a powerful nationalist movement begun in the early eighteenth century in which all foreign influences on Japan and the Japanese language were rejected, especially if they had come from China. As Harry Harootunian has written, nativism "aimed to remove Japanese from the Other [China] and from both history and culture" (409). Nativism was thus an attempt to return to the 'age of the Gods' almost a thousand years earlier before the 'corrupting' influence of Buddhism and Confucianism. The 'age of the Gods' was represented by Japan's earliest written works, the Kojiki, Nihon Shoki, and the Man'yôshû, "the texts that were important both to *kokugaku* and the new ideology of the Meiji state." These were also "the ones first translated into English, under the influence of an anti-Chinese rhetoric and the myth of linguistic purity," as Joshua Mostow notes ("Translating" 9).

Nativists were in favour of 'purifying' the Japanese language. Purity meant untainted by the 'corrupting' influence of Chinese, which was "held responsible for the stunting of the poetic growth of the Japanese language" (Mostow, "Translating" 7). Discussions of Japanese poetry in Waley's time, as we will see, often deride Chinese in favour of 'pure Japanese words' (yamato kotoba). The association was quickly made between 'pure' Japanese poetry and the 'pure' and 'unique' Japanese spirit, which was found to be essentially poetic, irrational, and imbued with the spirit of nature. Japanese poetry was characterized by its 'silence,' in so far as what is said is less important than what is not said, or what is only suggested. By implication, non-Japanese--Chinese and Western--discourse is verbose, and the 'non-Japanese spirit' is less poetic than prosaic and rational. It can be argued that this mythology of the Japanese spirit as evinced by Japanese poetry was converted into doctrines of ethnic purity and a bellicose nationalism. Anti-Chinese rhetoric in literary discourse and elsewhere was particularly prominent in the decades when Japan was attempting to colonize China. As for 'silence,' some post-war scholars have come to see how this phenomenon is less a unique feature of Japanese poetry than a politics of suppression and self-repression (see Field, Dale). This extremely simplified summarization of a long course of nationalism in Japan, from kokugaku to kokutai to nihonjinron,<sup>33</sup> as it pertains to poetry, will hopefully become clearer when we see it illustrated in the ideas of Waley's contemporary, and rival, Yone Noguchi (1875-1947).

Noguchi is worth comparing to Waley for several reasons, not least because he was a contemporary rival of Waley's as an authority or interpreter of Japanese

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<sup>33</sup> Kokutai might be translated as "national polity," though from the Meiji Restoration to the end of World War Two in Japan it came to be identified with the Emperor system; as Gluck says, "kokutai served to identify the nation and separate 'them' from 'us' " (146). Nihonjinron means "discourse on the Japanese," a large body of texts devoted to explicating the 'Japaneseness' of the Japanese.

culture. Noguchi associated himself with the modern movement in English literature, becoming friends with Yeats, Pound and Eliot, and publishing frequently in The Egoist. Elkin Mathews, who published Yeats, Pound and Joyce, and Noguchi's Pilgrimage: A Book of Poems (1912), described his association with Noguchi as "a new Anglo-Japanese Alliance," acknowledging their roles as popularizers of Japan (qtd. in Nelson 152). Second, as editor of the two-volume Selected Writings of Yone Noguchi (1990); Yoshinobu Hakutani has recently argued that not only has "no other Japanese writer in history . . . ever written so much and so well in English as Yone Noguchi" (9), but that Noguchi "played the most important role in modern times as a poet and interpreter of the divergent cultures of the East and West" (17). One might argue that Rabindranath Tagore played a more important role; he certainly wrote better English. Hakutani also claims that "in the 1920s and 1930s Noguchi was also the most well-known interpreter of Japanese visual arts in the West, especially England," though I would say without hesitation here that this distinction belongs not to Noguchi but to Laurence Binyon (16; see Hatcher). Finally, we should look at Noguchi because he represents, with his vociferous acclamations of Japan and Japanese poetry, precisely the spirit that Waley was rejecting with the conspicuous unsentimentality of his Japanese Poetry and other texts on the poetry of Japan. Since Noguchi is not well known in the field of English literature, the reader will bear with me while I present 'Noguchi's Japan' that Waley rejected.

Noguchi had been discouraged in Japan by the relative lack of English language ability among his teachers, so he left for America in 1893 to find "the opportunity for learning the spoken English [sic]" (Story 8). It was in America, through the influence of the poet Joaquim Miller, who had "a great love of Japan and the Japanese," that Noguchi seems to have been made aware of his supposed uniqueness and special qualities as a Japanese (Story 56). "The big-hearted bard



encouraged his dreams," wrote Eunice Tietjens in a review of Noguchi's Spirit of Japanese Poetry (1914), and "presently fragile little poems began to appear in The Lark, a first breath from the living Orient" (97). It was in America and Europe that Noguchi "surrendered to the spell of [his] own 'far away island country,'" to borrow the words of Leslie Pincus, and so Noguchi must be included as one of the "select group of Japanese intellectuals and writers" studied by Pincus who "reappropriated Japan from Europe as an exoticized object" (qtd. in Sharf 138). Everywhere in his autobiography, The Story of Yone Noguchi (1914), he writes of "my Japanese mind," "my Oriental heart," "my Japanese sense of art," and of the myth that "the Japanese mind, like any other Japanese thing, only works upside down to that of the Englishman" (158; 160-1). In a comparison of Chicago with Japan, he wrote that "smoke means Chicago," while "flower means Japan"; "money means Chicago," whereas "art means Japan. . . . There's some difference, you see, between Chicago and Japan" (93). In 1894-95, Noguchi was "delighted to learn about the triumphant military campaign in China," says Hakutani, though it is not clear whether at this time Noguchi made the connection between art and flowers and military power (14).

London, on the other hand, was for Noguchi, "Fairyland," making him a good case for a study in occidentalism. At almost the precise moment that Eliot was describing the yellow fogs of London in images of urban slums and cultural decay, Noguchi wrote dreamily of the famous fogs and their "grey vastness of mystery" (Story 153; 122). As Westerners were seduced by an image of Japanese women that transcended reality, Noguchi wrote pages on the beauty of English women, comparing them with the "hopelessness" of Japanese women (Story 153-5). But in London he found the general knowledge about Japan, "even by educated people," to be very low. "The delight and admiration," of the English for Japan and Japanese things, he lamented, was "only in the things of old Japan"

(Story 165). Noguchi was probably right to detect in England an orientalist denial of Asian modernity; Western interest in Japan was, after all, closely connected to primitivism in art, as Elisa Evett has shown. But it does not appear as though Noguchi himself was particularly helpful in dispelling popular myths and misconceptions.

Noguchi sought out Yeats, meeting him in London in 1904 and again in 1920. In his book of essays, Through the Torii (1922), he wrote "A Japanese Note on Yeats," that revealed his "Japanese" critical impression. Noguchi made "an unconditional surrender to Yeats," and found while reading Yeats's early poetry, the "sudden awakening of Celtic temperament in [his] Japanese mind" (110-13). Yeats's literary strength, Noguchi felt, lay in his "objecting to the literary encroachment of a different element" (English culture), and retaining a "pure, proud, lonely, defiant spirit." Likewise, the "spontaneity of the real Japanese hearts and imagination, indeed quite Celtic," claimed Noguchi, "has been evoked and crooked and even quite ruined by the Chinese literature," which "destroyed imagination" (113). Noguchi not only completely misunderstands Yeats, who never rejected his important English literary influences (e.g., Blake and Shelley), but we can see how his Sino-phobic notions of linguistic purity underwrite an increasingly menacing Japanese nationalism and mislead any genuine attempt to understand Japan and its literature.

In 1914 Noguchi read a paper before the Japan Society entitled "Japanese Poetry." His wordy opening sentence reads thus: "I come always to the conclusion that the English poets waste too much energy in 'words, words, and words,' and make, doubtless with all good intentions, their inner meaning frustrate, at least less distinguished, simply from the reason that its full liberty to appear naked is denied" (sic). The best "written poems," on the other hand, "are left unwritten or sung in silence" (86). Quintessential written poetry is, of course,

Japanese poetry, at least the old Japanese poetry, [which] is different from Western poetry in the same way as silence is different from a voice, night from day. . . . Oh, our Japanese life of dream and silence! . . . It is not too much to say that an appreciative reader of poetry in Japan is not made but born, just like a poet. . . . when I see that our Japanese poetry was never troubled by Buddhism or Confucianism, I am glad here to venture that the Western poet would be better off by parting from Christianity, social reform and what not [and] live more of the passive side of Life and Nature . . . (89-93)

This was Noguchi's "Japanese opinion, shaped by hereditary impulse and education" (92). Meanwhile the world was mobilizing for total war and social reform movements were being "forcibly crushed" in Japan and barely contained in Britain (Gluck 176).

It is clear to see that much of Noguchi's argument is derived directly from kokugaku and kokutai, the former a strong influence on, the latter a key element of, contemporary Japanese education--Noguchi's education--since 1869, culminating with the Imperial Rescript on Education of 1890, whose basic premise was that "national education should serve the state" (Gluck 103; see also 120-1, 146-50). And as Mostow adds,

literature, or a certain view of Japanese literature, was part and parcel of the state apparatus of the new government under the titular head of the "restored" Emperor Meiji, and the translation of this literature into English, in particular, played an important role in Europeans', and especially Britons', perception of Japan as an equal, and legitimately equally imperial, power. ("Translating" 3)

We begin to see the significance of Noguchi's crusade in England.

Almost as fascinating as Noguchi's paper is the discussion that took place afterwards. Osman Edwards, author of Japanese Plays and Playfellows (1901; see chapter four), gave the inevitable defense of English poesy, retorting that "not only English literature but nearly all European literature, even if it have not the suggestive and delicate characteristics of Japanese poetry, appears infinitely rich in comparison to that of Japan" (qtd. in Noguchi "Japanese Poetry" 104).

Chairman Longford, who we met in chapter one, concurred, then proceeded to pretty much endorse everything else that Noguchi had said, pointing out that "all Japanese poetry is still written in the old native language of Japan, unadulterated with any of the harshly-sounding Chinese vocables which have been added to it in thousands in recent years, and which have done so much to spoil its softness and pleasing cadences to the ear" (qtd. in Noguchi "Japanese Poetry" 101). So Longford receives the rhetoric from the Japanese 'pundit,' reinforces it, and since it was generally accepted that superior poetry meant superior civilization, offers a little more justification for the colonization of China.

Noguchi fans who argue that I misconstrue his meaning should note the letter he wrote to Rabindranath Tagore in 1938 defending Japanese imperialism in China as "the inevitable means, terrible it is though, for establishing a new great world in the Asiatic continent, where the 'principle of live-and-let-live' has to be realized. Believe me, it is the war of Asia for Asia." And how should one respond to Japan's "tremendous work" in China? ("the war is not for conquest, but . . . for uplifting her simple and ignorant masses to better life and wisdom"): ". . . cover your ears, when a war bugle rings too wild. Shut your eyes against a picture of your martial cousins becoming a fish salad! . . . I believe that such one who withdraws into a snail's shell for the quest of life's hopeful future, will be in the end a true patriot worthy of his own nation" (Letters 227-9). Silence does,

evidently, like a cancer grow. The Poet Laureate wrote a scathing reply, expressing great dismay with "the spirit of Japan which I learned to admire in your writings and came to love through my personal contacts with you" (Letters 229).

Incidentally, Miner (187) and Hakutani (17-9) both point out that Noguchi's own verse was heavily influenced by Walt Whitman, particularly his "sweeping lines and romanticized self" (Hakutani 18); but before the Japan Society he claimed to have "failed in my attempt to read Walt Whitman--yes, during the last seventeen years; true to say, a page or two from "Leaves of Grass" soon baffled, wearied and tired my mind. The fact that he utterly failed to impress my mind makes me think accidentally (sic) what a difference there is between East and West" ("Japanese Poetry" 93). Noguchi appears to have learned from Whitman himself the technique of mythologizing his own experience, which first requires the careful manipulation of one's formative influences.

The amazing thing about Yone Noguchi was not that he really wrote awkward, at times incomprehensible, English, in spite of his own belief that "only he who dares an extraordinary act in language such as no native writer ever dreams," can effect "a real revelation" ("Japanese Poetry" 88-9); rather, it was the almost completely uncritical spirit with which he was received in Britain that now appears truly extraordinary. George Meredith exclaimed that Noguchi's "poems are another instance of the energy, mysteriousness, and poetical feeling of the Japanese, from whom we in our turn are receiving much instruction" (qtd. in Hakutani 15). Pound wrote in 1911 to say that he was "delighted" that Noguchi was "giving us the spirit of Japan" which accorded with his own efforts to "deliver from obscurity certain forgotten odours of Provence & Tuscany" (qtd. in Noguchi, Letters 210-11). In the same year he wrote to Dorothy Shakespeare to say that Noguchi's "matter is poetic & his stuff not like everything else, he is doubtless sent to save my artistic future. I was in doubt about his genius but now

I am convinced" (EP and DS 44). Similarly, Yeats wrote in 1921 thanking Noguchi for his Hiroshige (1921), employing terms that reveal his own debt to Aestheticism and primitivism: "all your painters are simple, like the writers of Scottish ballads or the inventors of Irish stories," while modern Western poets are unfortunately terribly complex and "European painting grown strange and foreign" (Letters 220-1). No evidence shows that Noguchi's linguistic revelations had the slightest influence on English writers, but his construction of a silent passive 'poetic Japan,' distracting Western audiences from less aesthetically pleasing Japanese realities, evidently enjoyed considerable success. As Miner commented, Noguchi "seemed like the real thing to a generation who knew no Japanese," and who "seemed not to question anything Japanese" (186-7).

With the notable exception of Arthur Waley. Alice Corbin Henderson of the journal Poetry,<sup>34</sup> who knew no Japanese, might proclaim that "the vivid sense of the originals is conveyed extremely well in many of the translations given by Mr. Noguchi" (92), but Waley, who reviewed in the Times in 1922 Noguchi's Through the Torii and Nijû Kokusekisha no Shi ('poems from a citizen of two nations,' 1920), simply stated that Noguchi's "desire to write impressively ha[d] made him almost unintelligible." He charged, furthermore, that Noguchi had ruined a famous Kokinshû poem by Saigyô through misunderstanding classical Japanese. What really irked Waley, however, was Noguchi's Whitmanesque ego: "while reading his verses one cannot for an instant be rid of him. It is 'boku,' 'boku' at every turn." "Boku," Waley pointed out, is Chinese for "your humble servant," and Noguchi might borrow from the

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<sup>34</sup> It is probably no coincidence that three of the most favorable reviews of Noguchi, including Henderson's, came from Poetry between 1915 and 1922. Pound was Poetry's official Foreign Correspondent in London, and in these years the magazine was practically his personal mouthpiece for the promotion of Imagism and *vers libre*. Noguchi also published between 1916 and 1918 four articles, including a bizarre piece entitled "The Future of American Humour," in The Egoist, another 'Pound publication.'

Chinese this "wholesome tradition of objectivity." Waley concurred with the contemporary view that the "incursion of Chinese" had "absolutely killed Japanese poetry," though contrary to the nativist advocacy of a return to 'pure' Japanese--a course "manifestly impossible," he argued, "as well might our poets be called upon to write in Anglo-Saxon"--Waley suggested writing completely in Chinese: "an attempt to use the lucid and rigorous forms of Chinese verse would be a salutary exercise for a poet whose *vers-libres* flap and sprawl like wet linen that has torn from its pegs." Severe, perhaps, and certainly resonant with Waley's own preferences and idiosyncrasies, but a valuable and refreshing corrective in an age when 'anything goes,' particularly anything Japanese.

Noguchi's was merely the most audible of the many voices proclaiming the spirit of Japan in its poetry. To the Japan Society, for instance, Naoshi Kato delivered in 1915 his views on "Eastern Ideas and the Japanese Spirit." Though a devout Christian and editor of Kirisuto Kyô no Sekai ("The World of Christianity"), Kato's discussion of a collection of Chinese poems (The Song of Ten Bulls) dwelt on Shintoism, Confucianism, Buddhism, and Bushidô, and how these "religions" were consummated in Yamatodamashii, the spirit of Japan (123-4). Y. Haga in 1916 also offered up a lecture entitled "The Spirit of Japan." Japanese literature, he said, was characterized by two distinguishing features: "loyalty to the Emperor" and "love of Nature" (121-2). The former, he assured, was not "oppression by superiors," but "unification of the nation" and "the basis of the rapid progress and development of the new Japan" (127-8). Concerning the latter, Haga claimed there were "no other people in the world who love more the beauty of nature, than the sons of Japan." Of course these "features of our literature" only amounted to "the Spirit of Japan, or *Yamato-Damashii* " (130). In 1929, Dr. J. Ingram Bryan reminded his audience that "Japan is pre-eminently the land of lyricism. . . . the Japanese still think and speak and

write in poetic images and pictures. . . . With the creation of Nippon, the art of poetry was handed down to the first of the Yamato, the children of the gods" (92-4). While Eunice Tietjens had said that in Japan only "every educated person is still a poet" (98), Bryan declared that "from the Emperor down to the humblest subject interest in poetry remains unabated," and acquainted his listeners with the annual New Year's poetry competition in which the Emperor gives out themes for poetic composition (95). Of course, Bryan added the inevitable word on Chinese:

Nowhere else in Oriental poetry is there anything quite like the Japanese, not even in the poetry of China from which country Japan drew many an artistic impulse in the early days of the empire. Chinese poetry has rhyme, and a parallelism like Hebrew poetry, with an intricate arrangement of words according to their tones. From such complications Japanese poetry is happily free. (97)

"Interest in poetry," of course, was nothing timeless or spontaneous but something inculcated through the national education programme which, as mentioned above, was created by and for the state. Memorizing the Hyakunin isshu, rest assured, is scarcely an assignment that most students appreciate. The "New Year's Poetry Party," as Mostow says, was "an essential element of the modern emperor system" ("Translating" 9). Hardly "in heaven was it first made and sung," as Bryan suggests, but was inaugurated in 1869, shortly after the Meiji Restoration (94).

In an age when so many--those who knew no Japanese and the "experts" alike--were extolling the inimitable poetic spirit of the Japanese, it was exceptional to say otherwise. Waley dismisses the myth of Japan as an "island of poets" in a book review of 1921 with the cool remark, "it is more important that some people should write good poetry than that every one (including the Royal



Family) should write bad verses on every possible occasion" ("Japanese Impressions" 223).

It was impossible to see in the '10s and '20s just how far the spirit of Japan would be corralled by the cause of nationalism, but by the time it became apparent Waley wrote his own self-vindicating article entitled, "The Japanese Spirit" (1943). There he informed that Yamatodamashii, since "about the time of the Russo-Japanese war," had come to mean simply "'morale' in the military sense," and deplored the fact that "Japanese . . . are told by their leaders that they need not despair, for that unique quality, *Yamato-damashii*, will pull them through." He discussed the aesthetic use of the term in The Tale of Genji, where there is not "the slightest suggestion that 'the Japanese spirit' has any connection with military virtues," and pointed out that when

uncouth frontier war-lords displaced the exquisitely cultivated Court of the *Genji* period, an ideal of ruthlessness succeeded the cult of sensibility. But the uncultivated conquerors took over, in a rather unconvinced way, some of the aestheticism of their predecessors. They felt it incumbent upon them, even in the midst of their smash-and-grab campaigns, to make poems about flowers and moonlight. This rather mechanical pre-occupation with pretty things has remained with the Japanese, partly as mere convention, partly as genuine legacy from the astonishing civilization of the *Genji* period. (147)

Written ten years after the publication of the last volume of his Genji, this passage reveals nostalgia for that Golden Age, a barely contained rage at the war, and scorn for 'the enemy's' flagrant manipulation of language--and poetry--for destructive ends. Working for the British Ministry of Information in 1943, Waley knew how that game was played, as he was then preparing his own anti-

Japanese propaganda pamphlet.<sup>35</sup> Like Tagore, Waley was profoundly disappointed in Japan, and possibly even remorseful, as he was no doubt aware that his own translations had played a part in the process whose horrible outcome he was then witnessing.

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<sup>35</sup> A draft of this document, called "Peoples of Asia, Unite Against Japan," is in the Waley--de Zoete collection at Rutgers. The information contained within is sufficiently detailed and disturbing to support the argument that Waley stopped translating Japanese literature in the 1930s for political reasons. See chapter six.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### No-ing the Japanese

I do not think that any single play is so complete a poem as the tragedies of Sophocles, and perhaps only a dozen rank as supreme literary masterpieces. But Seami knows unfailingly how to gain the reader's attention and how by skilful balancing of quite simple elements quickly to enlist his sympathy and stir his emotions . . .

(Arthur Waley, The Nô Plays of Japan, 1921)

The Japanese nô theatre is one of the great achievements of civilization. No art is more sophisticated than this intricate fusion of music, dance, mask, costume, and language, nor does any uphold higher ideals. Nô plays, like those of other theatres, were written to be performed, but some can stand as literature beside any play ever put between the covers of a book.

(Royall Tyler, Japanese Nô Dramas, 1992)

Western interest in Japanese No plays has had a considerably longer history than was suggested to English readers in 1916 by Pound's 'discovery' of the No in Fenollosa's notebooks or Yeats's 'invention' of a modern European form of aristocratic drama. In fact, the first known foreign encounter with the No took place almost half a century earlier, in 1869, when a special performance was given in honour of the visit of Prince Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh, to the Japanese Emperor Meiji.<sup>36</sup> Alfred was the first European royal to be personally received by the Emperor, whose newly-formed government was anxious to establish diplomatic relations with foreign powers. The No had been a traditional

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<sup>36</sup> The biographers of Prince Alfred (1844-1900), record that "Affie . . . spent hours watching performances of the No theatre; sweaty wrestling [sumo] and sword-play; extraordinary dancing and howling music." The Emperor Meiji presented him with "a magnificent bronze vase covered with beautifully executed birds and dragons, . . . large porcelain bowls of exquisite workmanship and painting; a priceless set of No masks, . . . and various bronzes, silks and satins. When they eventually set sail, after about five months in the east, the holds of the ship were filled almost to capacity." After Prince Alfred's death in 1900, this collection was sold by public auction (Van der Kiste and Jordaan 71-2; 176-7).

entertainment of the Shogunate until the Meiji restoration of 1868 and had almost disappeared along with the Shogunal government.<sup>37</sup> It appears as though the No drama was therefore one of the first traditional Japanese arts to be rediscovered and put to use by the new state in the promotion of Anglo-Japanese relations. As Benito Ortolani has written, "interest shown by members of the imperial family supported by the appreciation of foreign diplomats and visiting artists, created a new atmosphere which made possible a slow reopening of stages and reorganization of companies, audiences and amateur practitioners" (107). It was not long before the No had found itself a new patron and became "the official state music of the [new] regime" (Keene 394). The first president of the Nogakkai (Society for the Study of No) was Hijikata Hashimoto, Minister of the Imperial Household. In attendance on that historic occasion was the British diplomat, A. B. Mitford (1837-1916), who recorded his impressions of the performances and summaries of the plots of four No plays and two kyôgen (farces) in his popular Tales of Old Japan (1871), discussed below.

Over the course of the next forty-five years a steady trickle of commentaries, summaries of plays, and translations appeared in several European languages, particularly English, thanks to the especially close political and economic ties that germinated in this period between Japan and Britain. Of this English tradition of No scholarship, including the collaborative project of Pound and Fenollosa, Arthur Waley was acutely aware. As in his Japanese Poetry (1919), The Nô Plays of Japan (1921) includes a bibliography that makes evident his familiarity with

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<sup>37</sup> Benito Ortolani suggests that the Japanese ambassador Tomomi Iwakura (1825-1883), "spurred by his experiences abroad of presentations of classical opera on official occasions," was the first to organize No performances for the Emperor in 1876, though Mitford's records and those of Prince Alfred clearly indicate that the emperor witnessed No as least as early as 1869 (106).

what he believed were the most important and contemporary European and Japanese texts.<sup>38</sup>

One of Waley's aims in translating No plays was to correct some of the views and misunderstandings of his predecessors, particularly the negative views of earlier scholars with which he did not agree, but also some of the skewed attitudes of his contemporaries, notably Yeats and Pound. This he felt he was able to do using "the recent researches of Japanese scholars" and the treatises on No by Zeami Motokiyo (1363-1443) which were rediscovered in a Tokyo secondhand bookstore in 1908 and published in 1909 (5).<sup>39</sup> A second and related aim was to lend support to the avant-garde battle in European theatre against 19th century realism; to position himself as a mediator between this movement and the potentially useful Japanese No, if only it were properly understood:

A few people in America and Europe . . . would like to see a theatre that aimed boldly at stylization and simplification. . . . That such a theatre exists and has long existed in Japan has been well-known here for some time. But hitherto very few plays have been translated in such a way as to give the Western reader an idea of their literary value. It is only through accurate scholarship that the "soul of No" can be known to the West. (Knopf ed. 17)

This passage was certainly aimed as much at the literary recreation of Pound and Fenollosa as it was at earlier 'inaccurate' scholarship, though it appears only in

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<sup>38</sup> Waley's Nô Plays was published by George Allen & Unwin in March, 1921. This edition was reissued by Grove Press of New York in 1957, without the plates. Another edition was published by Knopf in 1922 specifically for American readers; the texts of the plays are the same, but the introduction is considerably abbreviated. It is, in fact, a very different text, without translations from Zeami's Fûshikaden, and without the preface or index. Unfortunately, it is the Knopf edition that was reissued by Tuttle in 1976, together with a strange reminiscence and poem by Alison Waley, who misspells the title of her late husband's book. All quotations used here are taken from the Grove edition, unless otherwise indicated.

<sup>39</sup> J. Thomas Rimer tells us that Zeami's treatises were edited by the writer Tôgo Yoshida and published in 1909 under the auspices of the Society for the Study of No, an official organization backed by the Imperial Household, as mentioned above (xxi; see also Ortolani 108).

the Knopf edition published in America. Other attacks on Fenollosa included a footnote pointing out that Fenollosa had worked with a "forged" version of Zeami's Kadensho (Fûshikaden; Knopf 22), and a comment in the bibliography that Fenollosa's versions were "fragmentary and inaccurate," though Waley commended Pound for using "admirably" the inadequate material with which he had to work (304).

Clearly Waley was positioning himself as *the* interpreter of Japan for European modernism. He would allow that Pound was a poet, but there was no excuse for inferior orientalism, of which he evidently found Fenollosa guilty. There is no doubt that his sympathies lay with the modern dramatic movement, as in the Knopf introduction he derided "the theatre of the West [as] the last stronghold of realism," and praised the No for long ago "discarding entirely the pretentious lumber of 19th century stageland" (17). On this point he was quite in accordance with Pound who complained that "our theatre [was] a place where every fineness and subtlety must give away; . . . where the paint must be put on with a broom" (Classic Noh 4). But in other important political ways, Waley's aims were completely opposed to those of Pound and Yeats, as I will demonstrate later in this chapter.

The No held another attraction for Waley that had either escaped the notice of earlier Western scholars or was deliberately overlooked by them, as they aimed their condemnation at the popular 'corrupt' theatre. This attraction was the strong homosexual tradition of the samurai class whose patronage inspired the development of No into a sophisticated art form, and the homoerotic elements in many of the most famous No playtexts, from Atsumori and Tsunemasa to the legends of Ushiwaka. Recent scholarship has begun to examine more closely the homoeroticism of the Japanese monastic and military societies in which No and kabuki flourished (e.g., Watanabe, MacDuff, Leupp).

Attractive young male actors quickly became favourites of older male patrons, whose homoerotic interests had as much to do with their patronage of the theatre as their love of the arts. That Waley was aware of this homoerotic aspect of No is clearly indicated in the original introduction, and information on customs and manners of the samurai class was readily available to him through other sources, as we will see.

In this chapter I shall trace the history of the English reception of the Japanese No in order to demonstrate how Waley's Nô Plays represents both a continuation of, and a sharp break with, earlier scholarship. This reception history is important because these are the scholars to which Waley responded, and it shows that he did not merely follow in the footsteps of Pound. I shall then discuss Waley's use of Zeami to construct his own version of the No drama, a version which attempted both to detach it from the exclusive aristocratic tradition with which it was perceived to be inseparable, and at the same time to elevate and legitimize the homoeroticism with which it is imbued. Finally, a few remarks on Waley's somewhat misguided coupling of the No with Zen Buddhism, an unfortunate result of having relied, perhaps too heavily, on "the recent researches of Japanese scholars," whose own ideologies seemed to have gone unquestioned.

The names of A. B. Mitford, Basil Hall Chamberlain (1850-1935), and W. G. Aston (1841-1911) are very familiar to students and scholars of Japan, though they are much less well-known in the field of English literature. Scholars who have written about Pound or Yeats and the No seldom bother to mention this earlier English scholarship, thus giving an impression that the No was exclusively the concern of enlightened, avant-garde Modernists.<sup>40</sup> Pound

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<sup>40</sup> For example, Hugh Kenner, The Pound Era (1971), or Nobuko Tsukui, Ezra Pound and Japanese Noh Plays (1983).

himself reported that Fenollosa "had been in opposition to all the Profs. and academes," which likely meant Aston and Chamberlain, as well as Japanese scholars (qtd. in Pinnington, "AW and Nô" 2). In a letter to Harriet Monroe in 1914, Pound scoffed at "the poor scholars" who had done their "bungling best" to render Japanese into English, though he advised Monroe not to mention them, thereby silencing the Victorians and promoting himself and Fenollosa as the ones 'in the No' (S. Letters 31).

The first 'bungling scholar' was A. B. Mitford, and he may also have been the first non-Japanese to witness an exhibition of No, at least in the nineteenth century. In his Tales of Old Japan he gave a short account of the legendary origin of the No, and short but accurate summaries of Hachiman of the Bow (Yumi Yawata), Tsunemasa, Hagoromo, and The Little Smith (Kokaji), as well as two kyôgen: The Ink Smearing Woman (Suminuri Onna) and The Theft of the Sword (Tachibai). This he was able to do only with "the assistance of a man of letters," for not surprisingly, Mitford found the medieval dialogue of No "utterly unintelligible" (109). He must have made some progress in reading Japanese, however, for he later commented that the poetry of the plays was "very beautiful." That poetry, however, he found "marred by the want of scenery and by the grotesque dresses and make-up" in No performance (114). Yet the "hideous wigs and masks" worn by No actors reminded him of the 'glorious' theatre of ancient Greece (109), a parallel that would be drawn by almost all European scholars to follow, including Waley (as seen in the epigraph and in Nô Plays 51-2). It was an odd comparison, considering that ancient Greek drama had never been seen. Thus Mitford was the first of many Western observers to find more literary than dramatic value in the No.

Mitford also made a significant distinction between No and the popular theatre (kabuki), pointing out that the latter was "exclusively the amusement of



the middle and lower classes" (108). He drew attention to the salary of the kabuki actor who had, in addition to his income, "a small mine of wealth in his patrons, who open their purses freely for the privilege of frequenting the green-room" (107). "Frequenting the green-room," or dressing room, a private space reserved for actors, might well have implied male prostitution, for it was understood at the time that young kabuki actors were also prostitutes. It was also well-known in Japan that kabuki actors who were "occasionally engaged to play in private" for their samurai patrons were often engaged for sexual services as well (Mitford 108). As Tsuneo Watanabe writes, "tacitly supported by the samurai class, the homosexual performance of *kabuki* was able to develop and eventually to reach its maturity" (88). The so-called 'vulgarity' or 'indecentry' of the popular theatre that appears in so many contemporary records refers precisely to this, and it obviously had an important influence on the Western reception of kabuki. But it also affected the critical reception of No, which was perceived as a morally--and therefore culturally--superior dramatic form.

Basil Hall Chamberlain was the first of the English translators of No. Arriving in Japan in 1873 at the age of 23, he immediately set to work learning the Japanese language, both classical and modern. Just three years later he published in Cornhill Magazine a translation of the No play The Death Stone (Sesshoseki). There he referred to the No as "the very aristocracy of the histrionic art" where "scarcely a plebeian face is to be seen" (479). He dwelt on the arrangements of the No stage, "whose every dimension has been carefully handed down by tradition," but did not identify his source for this tradition, maintaining that "English readers would hardly care to follow us through the labyrinth of partly prosaic and partly mystical detail" of the native authorities (480).

In his The Classical Poetry of the Japanese (1880) Chamberlain reissued Sesshoseki and added translations of Hagoromo, Kantan, and Nakamitsu, as well as two kyôgen, Ribs and Skin (Hone Kawa) and Zazen ("Meditation"). By including No plays in a text on poetry, Chamberlain evidently agreed with Mitford that Nogaku was, first and foremost, poetry. Writing of Japanese poetry in general, Chamberlain concluded that "if we had to express in one word the impression left on our mind by an attentive consideration of [Japanese poetry], that one word would be *prettiness* " (20). Perhaps it was this "prettiness" that Chamberlain attempted to recapture in this choral passage from Hagoromo:

The tints of sunset, while the azure wave  
From isle to isle the pine-clad shores doth lave.  
From Ukishima's slope,--a beauteous storm,--  
Whirl down the flow'rs: and still that magic  
form,  
Those snowy pinions, flutt'ring in the light,  
Ravish our souls with wonder and delight. (145)

So thoroughly are we students of the School of Modernism that we find it difficult to regard such verse as anything but embarrassingly outmoded. Other passages Chamberlain found beautiful in the original but impossible to translate (137).

Commenting on the "pivot-words" (kake-kotoba) commonly used in No texts, Chamberlain remarked that they were "the height of misapplied ingenuity" in English, but in Japanese "delightful in the extreme, passing, as they do, before the reader, like a series of dissolving views, vague, graceful, and suggestive" (6). Contradicting Mitford, Chamberlain praised the No costumes as "gorgeous in the extreme." The lack of scenery he thought ideal, and "when this rule is broken through, and an attempt made at scenic effect, the spectator cannot

help feeling that the spell is in a matter broken, so completely ideal a performance being only marred by the adoption of any of the adventitious aids of the melodramatic stage." Similarly, Chamberlain found the chanting "by no means unpleasing," and the "cadences of the chorus are from the very first both soothing and impressive" (24). Evidently, though Chamberlain's concept of English poetry was firmly rooted in the Victorian period, his receptivity to Japanese No as dramatic performance was decidedly modern.

In his Things Japanese (1890), Chamberlain included a section on Japanese theatre in which he republished his version of Hagoromo. Not much new is said about the No, but an interesting impression of kabuki is added:

From the *No* theatres of the high-born and learned to the *Shibai* or *Kabuki* theatres of the common people is a great descent, so far as taste and poetry are concerned. . . . The *No* actors were honoured under the old regime, whilst the *Kabuki* actors were despised. . . . But these actors formed the delight of the shopkeeping and artisan classes, and they supplied to whole generations of artists their favorite objects of study. Most of the lovely old colour-prints representing frail beauties and other heroines were taken, not from the women themselves, but from the impersonation of them on the boards by actors of the male sex.

(491-3)

This must have come as a surprise to some European collectors of ukiyoe; it is also the closest that Chamberlain comes to suggesting that there might be some cultural value in the 'despised' popular theatre.

In 1899 William Aston published his History of Japanese Literature which was not only remarkably successful but apparently remains in use today (Kornicki, "Aston" 75). Aston introduces to an English speaking audience "Kwan-ami," his son "Se-ami," and Zeami's son-in-law as the founders of No

drama (Kan'ami Kiyotsugu [1333-1384], Zeami Motokiyo [1363-1443], and Komparu Zenchiku [1405-1468]), but he suggests "with great probability, that although the names of Kiyotsugu, Motokiyo, and their successors are given as authors of the No, they were in reality only responsible for the music, the pantomimic dance (the 'business,' as we might say), and the general management" (200). The question of authorship will later be a major concern of scholars, including Waley, though at this stage it is dismissed by Aston as a matter of "minor importance" (201).

Of course, Mitford and Chamberlain had pointed out that the audiences of No dramas were limited to the Japanese court and aristocracy, though Aston appears especially class-conscious in his remark that "to the vulgar the No are completely unintelligible" (200). Like Chamberlain, Aston did battle with the classical Japanese language, and it was perhaps his frustration in translating it that influenced his pointedly negative perception of a key feature of its poetry:

A very striking feature of the No is the lavish use which they make of . . . the "pivot-word," which is employed in the No to an extent and in a manner previously unknown to Japanese literature. . . . I venture to think that the "pivot" is a mistake in serious composition, and that the partiality for such a frivolous ornament of style manifested not only by the writers of No, but by the dramatists and novelists of the Yedo period, is a characteristic sign of an age of literary decadence and bad taste. (201-2)

So, as literature the No are flawed, for they are hopelessly decadent and weighted down with a "frivolous ornament of style." Further, "[t]he No are not classical poems. They are too deficient in lucidity, method, and good taste to deserve this description." As for their dramatic qualities, Aston decreed, "the No have little

value. There is no action to speak of, and dramatic propriety and effect are hardly thought of" (203).

In spite of Aston's evident exasperation in attempting to locate a position for the No within known European categories--he confessed that "the difficulty of arriving at the meaning of such compositions as the No is very considerable" (205)--Aston felt obliged to offer his readers a partial translation of Takasago, which was presumably only the "finest" of an otherwise unimpressive art (206). Nowhere in Aston's discussion was there any indication that he had actually seen a No play. As P. F. Kornicki has written, Aston was "a profoundly textual scholar" ("Aston" 67). Aston's interest in the No was largely philological and anthropological rather than literary or artistic. His attitude to the popular theatre, in spite his recognition of the "genius of Chikamatsu," might be summed up in this terse comment on kabuki: "Native critics agree that the Kyaku-bon contain little that is of value as literature" (288). As with Chamberlain, the identity of Aston's native informants is obscured, but their word is accepted here as final.

Two years later in 1901, Osman Edwards published his Japanese Plays and Playfellows which gives an interesting account of some actual No performances. Like Aston, Edwards struggles to find suitable English terms to describe the No, beginning with "religious plays" and "No Dance," dismissing "Operetta," and finally arriving at "musical pantomime" or "musical drama" (39-42). Edwards is less scholarly but more spirited than Aston, and he at least viewed the No as a living art, a dramatic performance that had to be experienced to be properly appreciated. Edwards also discusses the popular theatre, not only of Japan but the japonisme-inspired theatre of London, a burgeoning sub-genre that responded to the demand in London for all things Japanese. It is refreshing to observe that Edwards could discuss the contemporary Japanese theatre scene without making

highbrow or moral distinctions between the various forms. But Edwards' book is a product of japonisme as well as an interesting observation of it: Japan is itself exotic theatre, the "land of laughing *musumé*," [girls], and Edwards a descendant of Lafcadio Hearn, to whom his book is dedicated (46). And while the No is said to be more beautiful than medieval European miracle plays, "no student of dramatic art could think for a moment of bracketing Chikamatsu with Shakespeare" (58). This, although Chikamatsu did not write No plays. Perhaps the most valuable part of this book is Edwards' interview with the renowned kabuki actor, Danjuro (Ichikawa Danjûrô IX [1838-1903]), the descendent of a long line of famous actors, all named Danjuro (262-71). But even here it is evident that the great Danjuro is not going to reveal anything new or surprising to this 'outsider.' Nor is it surprising that Edwards is not in the list of suggested reading in Waley's 'scholarly' bibliography.

In 1902, Captain Frank Brinkley published his mammoth twelve-volume history of China and Japan to which Yeats and Pound owed much of their knowledge of east Asian culture (Longenbach 44-6). Brinkley gave a good historical account of the No, discussing its sources in dengaku (field music), kagura (god's music) and sarugaku (monkey music). He pointed out that from the No and the kyôgen "what may be called the vulgar acts of life were banished," and assured his readers that the No was "solemn and stately" (31-3); "Not one of them contains anything opposed to the canons of propriety" (49). He offered a translation of Ataka, and a description of a No performance:

The costumes were magnificent; the music was weird and slow; masks modelled with admirable skill were worn, and the spectacular effects often reached a high level of art. . . . These masked dancers of the *No*, deprived of the important assistance of facial expression, and limited to a narrow range of cadence, nevertheless succeeded in investing their

performance with a character of noble dignity and profound intensity of sentiment. (3: 28-9)

What passes almost unnoticed here is the employment of the past tense, the relegation of the No to medieval history. Brinkley is not speaking of his own encounter with the No, but only imagining that it must have been "noble" and "profound" because it was "a ceremonious accomplishment of military men" (30). This romanticization of a remote and exotic dramatic form that had never been seen was repeated by Pound and Yeats and, to some extent, by Waley as well.

In 1906, Frederick Dickins published his Japanese Texts and Primitive & Mediaeval Japanese Texts, the former presenting classical Japanese literature in romanized Japanese, and the latter translating it into English. The history of No is reviewed, and there is mention of the dramatic roles in No plays. More than previous scholars Dickins used many Japanese technical terms, an indication that a certain level of sophistication had been reached in Japanese studies (Dickins was not writing for a popular audience). More questionable was the employment of Greek terms to describe the stage, as if the two theatres were one and the same. Otherwise, Dickins did not appear to have been greatly impressed by the No: "Notwithstanding much repetition, plagiarism, conventionalism, disconnectedness, lack of dramatic power, of humour or wit, and superabundance of verbal conceit, many of the *utahi* are charming productions in their way . . ." (Primitive 396). Interestingly, some of the features that Dickins found wanting in the No might have been found in the popular theatre, but so thoroughly had that theatre been stripped of its status as Literature that in Dickins it went simply unnoticed.

Arthur Lloyd (1852-1911), a lecturer at Tokyo Imperial University, gave a presentation called "Notes on the Japanese Drama" at a meeting of the Asiatic

Society of Japan in 1907. Little new information on the No was given, though some curious comments were made about kabuki. After first pointing out that female kabuki actors had been prostitutes before they were forbidden in 1629 to perform, Lloyd offered the bizarre conjecture that kabuki may have been introduced to Japan from Spain: "Some [Spanish sailors and merchants] would possibly possess copies of Lope de Vega's comedies, and thus may have come to Japan the seed from which grew the *kabuki* theatre" (108). So kabuki is found to be completely immoral--"no *samurai* or respectable person would have degraded himself by attendance at a performance, and the actors themselves were looked upon as the dregs of society" (110)--but this immorality was a foreign infection, from the which the 'pure' Japanese No was free. One cannot help but suspect that Lloyd's fantastic hypothesis was suggested to him by a native informant of a very particular political stripe.

On 24 November 1909, Marie Stopes read a version of the No play Sumidagawa to the Royal Society of Literature in London. The surprising thing about this event was the translator herself: Stopes was not a Japan scholar but a scientist in Japan for eighteen months from 1907 to study fossil angiosperms in rocks and coal (see Blacker). While in Japan she had struck up a friendship with Dr. Joji Sakurai who had been one of the first Japanese students in England. Sakurai introduced Stopes to the No and demonstrated to her his hobby of utai chanting. There soon developed the idea to collaborate on a book on No for English readers. Four years later in 1913, Stopes and Sakurai published Plays of Old Japan: The No, with an introduction by the Japanese ambassador to Britain, Takaaki Katô (see pp. 38-40). It is doubtful that Stopes knew much Japanese, and much of the translation was almost certainly the work of Sakurai. But the review of previous English scholarship and the section called "the effect of the No on the Audience and me," were undoubtedly the work of Stopes alone. In



her 1909 essay, she first challenged many of the images of No presented by Chamberlain, Aston, and Dickins: "Chamberlain calls the small drums tambourines, and is followed by Dickins in this, but the name gives quite a wrong impression of the instruments, which are shaped like hour-glasses, and have a much more dignified sound than tambourines emit" (158). "Archaic, primitive, one hears them called because of the absence of scenery and their childlike simplicity and need of 'make-believe.' But words which unaided can hold an audience, a drama which can paint the scene directly on the mind with little intervention of the eye, is surely not rightly described as primitive" (159).

It is doubtful that Sakurai agreed with Stopes' notion of the No's "childlike simplicity," but her overall enthusiasm was encouraging: "There is in the whole a ring of fire and splendour, of pain and pathos which none but a cultured Japanese can fully appreciate, but which we Westerners might hear--though the sounds be muffled--if we would only incline our ears" (160). It seems strange to think that a No play might be appreciated without understanding it, but at least one recent critic maintains that this is so: "Even people wholly ignorant of No or of the Japanese language have been deeply moved by performances of which they did not understand a single word" (Tyler 5). This appears to have been the case with Stopes, but with the support of Sakurai she was able to produce what was probably the best introduction to the study of No that had appeared to date. Her descriptions of the stage (with illustrations), the chorus, the music, the actors, the presentation of a play, the audience, the place of the No in contemporary Japan, difficulties in translation, were all quite detailed and informative. I would suggest, to borrow a phrase from Pound, that it was Stopes, not Fenollosa, who came "as a surprise to the scholars" (Classic Noh 3).

At least, Marie Stopes came as a surprise to the Japan scholar George Sansom, who had actually once been a part of a No chorus (Daniels 277). In 1911,

before Plays of Old Japan appeared, he challenged Stopes' high estimation of the No, suggesting that "there must have been something outside the No which held Dr. Stopes' attention--the comparative novelty, the exotic speech and surrounding, the mystery of the half-revealed?" (130). His own estimation was decidedly lower. Speaking of the No's abundant use of literary material from classical sources, Sansom asserted that "the reverence for antiquity . . . has always been a sterilizing influence in Japanese literature" (127). As for recognizing the allusions in pivots, puns and pillow words, he called it "the charm of the curio shop, not the beauty of language and thought" (128). He agreed with Stopes on one thing: the music was effective, and Stopes was reassured to read that he found in the flute "a strange and moving quality of sadness." "But," added Sansom, "so has the amma's pipe in quiet streets at midnight, or . . . a syren from the heart of a sea fog" (129). On the cries of the drummers, Stopes had described them as a sound like the "howl of a cat," and confessed to being unimpressed (Plays 13); Sansom heard these "shrieks of 'iiao' . . . with resentment" (129). Apparently, the Fenollosas had also been reminded of the "noises of backyard fence cats" (qtd. in Pinnington, "Failure" 32). Even Royall Tyler admits the drummer's cries are "eerie until one is familiar with them" (12).

One more observation of Sansom's that is worth noting is his interesting argument that "the No has not to be considered as a drama, but as a performance of singing and dancing, where parts are allotted to the performers which correspond only roughly to parts in a play" (138). The implication of this observation is that the No should not be judged, favourably or unfavourably, by the criteria of European drama or literature, which all Europeans were doing, even Sansom himself: "it is sometimes urged that any one literature must be a law unto itself, and that its achievements must be judged by their approach to its ideals. This is to deny the existence of absolute standards of taste, and I know of

no warrant for assuming that beauty is a question of geography" (131). Twenty years later, he revised this opinion in his Japan: A Short Cultural History:

"European students are disappointed when they read the texts of plays which the Japanese admire, perhaps because they look for the things which they would expect to find in European literature. These they do not find" (487). One can only speculate as to whether the translations of Waley, which Sansom greatly admired, influenced this change of view.

The story of Yeats and Pound's encounter with the No is too well-known to warrant repetition here, and I will be referring to it in the discussion which follows.<sup>41</sup> I would only like to add to the debate my own observation that Pound and Yeats were never really interested in the No or Japan so much as the *use* of Japanese culture for their drama and poetry programmes. After the initial excitement, Pound's interest in Japan quickly waned, and Yeats always remained preoccupied with Irish culture and society. As Adrian Pinnington has written, the No "served the myth of Modernism itself; in this case the myth that Yeats' desire to create an alternative to the naturalist drama of Europe was something startlingly new." To my knowledge, neither had seen a No play, nor had ever expressed any desire to (neither had Waley.) The No was for them "an imaginary theatre" (Pinnington, "Failure" 35).

I might also point out that the treatment of the dancer Michio Ito (1893-1961) derived from a general Western representational tendency to treat all things Japanese, including Japanese people, as objects on display, exhibition

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<sup>41</sup> Readers may refer to Earl Miner, Richard Taylor, Nobuko Tsukui, Yoko Chiba, James Longenbach, Masaru Sekine, or Adrian Pinnington in the list of works cited. Of particular interest is Adrian Pinnington who has made some interesting observations about the Pound/Fenollosa project; among them, the curious paradox that Mrs. Fenollosa believed Pound's poetic intuition was a more important qualification for editing Fenollosa's papers than any knowledge of Japanese language and culture ("The Failure of Ritual" 34). Pinnington also suggests, as I do, that the relative neglect of Waley's translations as a subject for study is partly due to the hostility to scholarship generated by Pound and Yeats and carried on by scholars themselves ("Arthur Waley and the Nô" 1-7).

pieces to satisfy a European taste for the exotic, as we saw in chapter one. Ito as a boy had "liked anything foreign and wanted to become an opera singer, so he left Japan for Paris in 1911" (Carruthers 32). In Europe he met Yeats, who required a dancer for his play At the Hawk's Well. Ito knew nothing about the No, finding it archaic and boring, but Yeats wanted a 'Japanese atmosphere' and felt that Ito, and only Ito, could make his play successful (Yeats, Essays 224). Similarly, Edmund Dulac, referring to Ito's own production of At the Hawk's Well in New York (put on without Yeats's permission), reassured Yeats that "the presence of so many Japanese in the cast, rightly or wrongly, gives [one] a certain amount of confidence" (Finneran, Harper and Murphy 351). In the final analysis, The Classic Noh Theatre of Japan is more useful as a text about Yeats and Pound themselves than as an introduction to the No.

To sum up, European scholars and observers before Waley had trouble locating a position for the No within known European categories, often settling for tenuous comparisons with Greek drama or Shakespeare. They made clear moral and class distinctions between the aristocratic 'high art' of the noble samurai--the No--and the 'vulgar low art' of the common people--kabuki, though this vulgarity or indecency was never fully explained. Frustration with comprehending or translating certain literary elements of No playtexts led to complaints of 'decadence' or 'sterility.' Waley responded to all of these misconceptions.

In his Japanese Poetry (1919) Waley had expressed the intention to later translate "the poetry of the No Plays" (8). It is apparent that he proceeded in the footsteps of earlier 'textual' scholars, notably Chamberlain and Aston who, as indicated, viewed the No primarily as poetry. In his Nô Plays Waley further expressed the hope that his translations would be successful as English literature,

and inserted the tentative comment, "I think I have managed . . . to retain in one or two passages in each play something of the original beauty" (55, 5). A notable advance in Waley's opinion of Japanese poetry and in his own confidence in translating it had evidently taken place between 1919 and 1921. The earlier translations had been "chiefly intended to facilitate the study of the Japanese text; for Japanese poetry can only be rightly enjoyed in the original" (JP 8). That his translations of No plays were read and appreciated as English poetry is indicated in a review in the New Statesman where the reviewer, after citing a passage from Aya no Tsuzumi (The Damask Drum), made the favourable comment, "This is poetry. Nor does it much matter to the reader how much of its quality is due to Seami and how much to Mr. Waley" (22).<sup>42</sup>

No plays are today generally divided or catalogued into categories, or types, as plays concerning (1) gods, (2) warriors, (3) women, (4) mad persons, and (5) demons. As Thomas Hare explains, "the pace in this scheme moves from slow to fast, category 1 being the most sedate, and category 5 the most wild and volatile" (xxvii), though Miner, Odagiri and Morrell maintain that category four plays are "the most actively dramatic" (308). This rigid scheme was not followed by Zeami, but was imposed later in the Tokugawa period (1600-1868). Waley cites a programme from the "forged" Kadensho of 1600 that suggests six categories (28), but for the discussion which follows, I will use the clearer and more concise modern classification and the terms above as enumerated by Hare.

On the 25th of April, 1920, Waley read a paper to the Japan Society entitled "The Nô: A Few Translations," with Marie Stopes in the chair. By now Stopes was known as the author not only of Plays of Old Japan but of the best-selling

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<sup>42</sup> The review was anonymous, but it was likely Desmond MacCarthy, who was then literary and drama critic for The New Statesman. The New Statesman had already published Waley's article on "Yûgen" and his partial translation of the No play Hôkazô. See Adrian Smith's The New Statesman, pp. 178-209 for a good discussion of this weekly as a literary review and the involvement of Bloomsbury.

and controversial Married Love (1918).<sup>43</sup> It is regrettable that the Japan Society, usually scrupulous in such matters, recorded nothing of the proceedings of that evening other than Waley's paper and the mere observation that it was "the first occasion in the history of the Society of a meeting being presided over by a lady" (Waley, "The No" 99). Waley presented his version of John Webster's Duchess of Malfi (1623) as it might have been constructed in No form, and translations of Hagoromo, Ikenie, and Hachinoki. His choice of Hagoromo (a woman play) was no doubt intended as a correction of the earlier versions of Chamberlain and Pound, though there was also a folklorist's interest in the widely known swan maiden's tale. Chamberlain had been dismissed as an outmoded poet by Waley in his Japanese Poetry (16); in his Nô Plays, Waley rejected Chamberlain's style once again with the terse description, "rhymed paraphrases" (304). Pound's version was simply incomplete, and without stage directions gave no idea of what was happening at important moments in the play.

Waley translated only the first part of Ikenie, an anonymous demon play that had not been performed for centuries in Japan and does not appear in the modern repertoire of 250 plays. Its interest for Waley may have been in its 'gothic' theme of human sacrifice, and as a category five play, "the most wild and volatile," he probably felt that it made for an exciting and exotic presentation, especially with lantern-slide illustrations of frightening demon No masks (99). Hachinoki (a mad person play) deals with an incident in the life of the Hôjô regent Tokiyori (1227-1263), who apparently travelled through the land disguised

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<sup>43</sup> Married Love, a sex manual for married couples, sold over a million copies and was translated into thirteen languages. Stopes went on to open in 1921 the first birth control clinic in England. Carmen Blacker says that "it is likely that she [Stopes] had read his [Waley's] works, but very unlikely that he had read hers" (165). I find this argument untenable, given that Stopes was notorious for Married Love; and from what we know of Waley, he read voraciously everything available on his given subject. Her Plays of Old Japan is listed in the bibliography of his Nô Plays, and the comment in his Japanese Poetry of 1919 indicates that he was already becoming familiar with No playtexts (8).

as a poor priest in order to "acquaint himself of the needs of his subjects" (Nô Plays 144). The play thus idealizes or romanticizes the samurai code of personal honour, social service, and a Spartan simplicity of life. The image of an enlightened ruler moving incognito among his faithful subjects immediately recalls Shakespeare's Henry V, a similarly nationalist drama removed from historical reality.

Waley's presentation of Webster's Duchess of Malfi in *No* form certainly indicates that he had Elizabethan-Jacobean drama in mind, and Webster is often compared to Shakespeare in English criticism; indeed, Swinburne in 1886 had ranked Webster next to Shakespeare in his important study that led to a late nineteenth and twentieth century revival of interest in Elizabethan and Jacobean drama, well before T. S. Eliot's influential "Elizabethan Dramatists" of 1924 ("John Webster").<sup>44</sup> Waley read Swinburne avidly together with Rupert Brooke and Hugh Dalton at Cambridge; Brooke recorded that one night they read him aloud under a tree by the light of a bicycle lamp (Hassall 183). Waley used the summary of the plot of the play from Brooke's posthumously published Cambridge dissertation, John Webster and the Elizabethan Drama (1916). Since Brooke's untimely death in 1915, his popularity had soared; he was reconstructed as a 'war hero' and a 'war poet' (although he was neither). Bernard Bergonzi claimed that "of all the myths which dominated the English consciousness during the Great War the greatest, and the most enduring, is that which enshrines the name and memory of Rupert Brooke" (qtd. in Hale x). It appears as though in drawing upon Brooke's work, Waley was paying his own respects to the memory of an old companion of Rugby and Cambridge, though perhaps he was also laying joint claim to Webster's rediscovery. (And perhaps also cashing

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<sup>44</sup> Eliot's first published reference to Webster occurs in his poem "Whispers of Immortality" (1919): "Webster was much possessed by death / And saw the skull beneath the skin" (Poems 77-8). I am grateful to John Cooper for informing me of Swinburne's role in the recovery of Webster.

in on the Brooke myth.) We will probably never know whether Brooke led Waley to Swinburne and Webster, or whether it wasn't the other way around.

Finally, Waley wanted to demonstrate how the No form offered possibilities for a rejuvenation of poetic drama in Europe. Yeats's had done as much with At the Hawk's Well (1916), perhaps there was room for more of the same experimentation, but for wider, more popular audiences. At least one reviewer of Waley's Nô Plays dwelt almost exclusively with this rather small part of Waley's book: "We who love the theatre know that the time is ripe for the revival of poetical drama. . . . Mr. Waley gives an admirable receipt for the writing of No plays. . . . We ought to see whether some form of the No is not one of the new bottles into which we may put our new wine" ("No Plays" 658). Yeats's Four Plays for Dancers was published on 28 October 1921, just five months after this review.

Waley's Nô Plays of Japan begins with a statement that emphasizes what Waley felt was the great importance of his work: "Till a few years ago very little was known about the authorship and early history of the Japanese Nô Plays. The recent researches of Japanese scholars have almost dissipated this darkness" (5). Actually, the European scholars mentioned above had unveiled a considerable amount of information concerning the No's early history, and it was widely recognized that Kan'ami and Zeami (Kwanami and Seami in Waley) had played crucial roles in the foundation and development of the No drama. European scholarship was not nearly as shrouded in darkness as Waley suggested, yet Waley wanted his English readers to understand that they had been deceived, and that his book would reveal the true 'soul of No': "It was supposed that only the music of the plays was written by their nominal authors. The words were vaguely attributed to 'Zen Priests.' We now know that in most cases Kwanami and Seami played the triple part of author, musical composer and actor" (316).



Waley was correct, however, to ascribe to Zeami and his father a far greater authority over No than had hitherto been supposed in the West. Waley's Nô Plays might be said then to represent then the European 'discovery' of Zeami, a dramatic genius now compared to Sophocles, Shakespeare, and Molière (Miner, Odagiri, Morrell 263).<sup>45</sup>

Waley first takes issue with previous English translators, notably Aston and Sansom, who had expressed irritation over pivot words and puns in No playtexts. Aston, we have seen, went so far as to call them decadent and in bad taste. Waley appears to disagree:

Seami insists that pivot-words (*kenyôgen*) should be used sparingly and with discretion. Many No writers did not follow this advice, but the use of pivot-words is not itself a decoration more artificial than rhyme, and I cannot agree with those European writers to whom this device appears puerile and degraded. Each language must use such embellishments as suit its genius. (34)

It is interesting to observe how Waley absolves Zeami of this 'crime' of the overuse of pivot words: the disciples did not heed the advice of their Sage. The analogy of pivot words with rhyme seems arbitrary, though elsewhere we have seen Waley condemn translators for employing rhyme. Rhyme is decidedly out of fashion in modern English poetry, so Waley's defense of pivot words as a "decoration" not unlike rhyme is a weak one indeed. He appears to have been

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<sup>45</sup> Waley acknowledges that the French Japan scholar, Noel Péri, had referred to Zeami's Works in his Etudes sur le Drame Lyrique Japonais (1909-1913), though he points out that Péri "had occasion to allude to them only incidentally" (5). Péri translated into French Oimatsu, Ôhara Gokô, Atsumori, Sotoba Komachi and Aya no Tsuzumu. Interestingly, Waley also translated the last three of these plays, obviously with a view to correcting Péri. This adds evidence to my argument that Waley followed, and became an important part of, an Anglo-European tradition of orientalism, and that Pound and Fenollosa's Noh was only one of the texts to which Waley responded.

more like Aston and Sansom than he realized, though he made every effort to appear Modern.

Waley was able to use Zeami in another significant way that had less to do with the No than with contemporary European politics. Literary Modernism under the influence of Pound and Yeats was just beginning to move politically to what we would now call the right, and the Japanese No theatre was being appropriated by them to legitimize their establishment of a European cultural elite. In his introduction to Certain Noble Plays of Japan (1916) Yeats wrote of his desire for a "distinguished, indirect and symbolic" theatre, "having no need of mob or press to pay its way--an aristocratic form" (Classic Noh 151). Only "the best minds" were invited to the opening of At the Hawk's Well on 2 April 1916 (qtd. in Chiba 610). In 1919, he reiterated the need for "an unpopular theatre and audience like a secret society where admission is by favour and never to many" ("People's" 254). Pound maintained that "these [No] plays were made only for the few; for the nobles; for those trained to catch the illusion." He underlined the "clear distinction between serious and popular drama" in Japan, adding "the merely mimetic stage has been despised" (Classic Noh 4, 11). Elsewhere, he declared that "the aristocracy of entail and of title has decayed," and "the aristocracy of the arts is ready again for its service" (qtd. in Longenbach 38). These were not merely the vague misguided sentiments of two disgruntled post-war poets. Pound's avant-garde position was already degenerating towards an extreme conservatism that would become virulent fascism, and Yeats's simmering anti-democratic views would end up in a most unsavoury right-wing nationalism.

The views of Yeats and Pound on No were strongly influenced by Brinkley, but they also found support in Fenollosa whose notes on the subject Pound quoted generously:

This ancient lyric drama is not to be confounded with the modern realistic drama of Tokio, with such drama, for instance, as Danjuro's. This vulgar drama is quite like ours . . . with nothing . . . but realism and mimetics of action. . . . As the pictorial art of the fifth period was divisible into two parts--that of the nobility, designed to adorn their castles, and that of the common people, printed illustration,--so has the drama of the last 200 years been twofold, that of the lyric Noh, preserved pure in the palaces of the rich; and that of the populace, running to realism and extravagance in the street theatres. (qtd. in Classic Noh 61)

Waley, as mentioned, was in line with the Modernist reaction against realism, but to his strong socialist or populist sympathies, such blatant elitism was anathema. He was therefore excited to find and eager to publicize evidence in Zeami to refute European fallacies: "I must explain how it was that in early days the Nô, contrary to the opinion usually accepted in Europe, was not solely an entertainment of the upper-classes" (39). He then devotes almost five pages of his introduction to a section called "Places of Performance" in which he includes shrines, "dry river-bed[s]," and locations in the country (38-42). One popular performance given at a temple in 1413 lasted for seven days, and Zeami reported that "all were admitted, rich and poor, old and young alike" (qtd. in Waley 38).

Waley relates an anecdote from a work called the Usô Kansetsu in which, at a performance of Tokusa (The Scouring Rushes, attributed to Zeami; Hare 47) given in the Kyôhô period (1716-1735), some actual reapers among the audience demonstrated to the No actors the proper way to handle a sickle. Apparently, the Kanze troupe then performed Tokusa in Edo (modern-day Tokyo) and startled the city audience with its realism. The performance was a failure, says Waley, "art should address itself to the man of average instruction, not to the specialist"

(39). Although carefully weaved into the anecdote, this last remark is Waley's, not Zeami's, and it appears deliberately devised and strategically placed to contradict the position on art being taken by Pound and Yeats (it also characterizes Waley's scholarship.) Waley believed he was upheld by the example of Zeami, who wrote in the Fûshikaden ('Teachings on Style and the Flower') that No actors must always "strive to bring happiness" to "high and low alike . . . from the nobility to audiences in mountain temples, the countryside, the far-off provinces, and the various shrine festivals" (Rimer and Yamazaki 40-1). Perhaps Zeami, court sycophant though he was, never forgot his common origins.

Most European commentators had pointed out that due to the abundance of allusions to classical literature the No was quite unintelligible to any but the learned aristocracy; this, certainly, was the conviction of Yeats and Pound. Waley argued that even an illiterate person would have understood the allusions because the poems were familiar to them as songs: "nearly all of them will be found in song-books such as the *Rôyei Shu*, and it is therefore obvious that a quite illiterate person might, if he had his head full of their airs, know enough of the words to make the Nô plays intelligible to him." Moreover, Waley continues, "many other classical poems obtained popular currency in an adapted form as *imayô*, a popular song-form, sung by the soldiers in *Atsumori* " (40-1). Unfortunately, the degree to which 'country' audiences understood the classical allusions in No plays is difficult, if not impossible, to determine. Perhaps some of the "airs" of No plays might have been familiar to common people through the tradition of ennen (long life) celebrations held at Buddhist temples where, says Ortolani, there were performances of "children's dances (*warabemai*), *gagaku* music, songs of the *imayô*, *rôei*, and *ko-uta* type, *shirabyôshi* dances, *dengaku*, *sarugaku*, and the like" (70-1). Ortolani maintains that there was a

"continuous give and take" between the ennen No and sarugaku No traditions (71). Zeami also explained that styles of performance were different for different audiences, though he did not refer specifically to language (Rimer and Yamazaki 41). Yet it was primarily in order to please the Ashikaga Shogunate--not the common people--that Zeami transformed the No into an art form sufficiently sophisticated that it effectively broke away from its roots among 'the people.' Waley himself admits that "it would be going too far to deny that Nô was, at least after the fifteenth century, essentially an aristocratic performance" (41). Nevertheless Waley had made his point, and he repeated it succinctly in an appendix: "Numerous passages [in Zeami] prove that the No at its zenith was not an exclusively aristocratic art. The audiences were very varied" (316). Theatre was a political forum in Europe, and the No had clearly become a part of it. It is revealing that, to my knowledge, Pound did not respond to Waley's Nô Plays, but the superannuation of Pound's Noh as a reliable translation or as a source of No history must be at least part of the reason for the decline of Pound's interest in Japanese culture, and for his growing hostility to Waley.

The Nô Plays of Japan contains nineteen No plays and summaries of sixteen more; there is only one kyôgen, "The Bird-Catcher in Hell."<sup>46</sup> The nineteen plays are grouped into chapters according to theme, although it is not always clear what theme Waley had in mind. Chapter one deals with warrior plays inspired by the Heike Monogatari ("Tales of the Heike") and includes Atsumori, Ikuta (Ikuta Atsumori), and Tsunemasa. Chapter two contains three plays that deal with the boyhood of the legendary hero Yoshitsune Minamoto (1159-1189), whose childhood name was Ushiwaka: Kumasaka, Eboshiori, and Benkei on the

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<sup>46</sup> Summaries are of the following plays: Izutsu, Kakitsubata, Hanagatami, Ominaeshi, Matsukaze, Shunkan, Ama, Take no Yuki, Torioibune, Tango Monogurui, Ikkaku Sennin, Yamamba, Hotoke no Hara, Mari, Tôru, Maiguruma. The summaries range from one short paragraph (Torioibune), to six pages (Shunkan).

Bridge (Hashi Benkei). Of the plays in chapter three, Waley says nothing, though Kagekiyo, Hachi no Ki, and Sotoba Komachi are all mad person plays in which an older character, greatly transformed by time, nostalgically recalls earlier and happier days. The plays in chapter four, Ukai, Aya no Tsuzumu, and Aoi no Ue, all deal in one way or another with the taking of life, forbidden by the Buddhist religion, and the frightening consequences that result. Plays in chapters five and six appear to have been grouped arbitrarily, though Waley says of Tanikô and Ikenie (chapter six) that they "both deal with the ruthless exactions of religion" (229).

The last complete play is the ceremonial God play, Haku Rakuten, the Japanese name for Waley's favorite Chinese poet, Po Chü-i (772-846). So great was Po Chü-i's popularity in the Heian period (he was the major Chinese poetical influence on Murasaki Shikibu, whose Tale of Genji Waley was by then already reading), and so deep his influence on Japanese culture, that Haku Rakuten depicts the Japanese God of Poetry, Sumiyoshi, driving him away. Thus Haku Rakuten is at once an homage to Po Chü-i and a play with an unmistakably nationalist message; Zeami portrays him, says Waley, as an "ill-bred foreigner" unfamiliar with honourific Japanese (252). Waley's own fascination with Po Chü-i is illustrated by the fact that his One Hundred and Seventy Chinese Poems (1918) contains sixty by Po Chü-i, and of the sixty-six poems in More Translations from the Chinese (1919), fifty-two are by Po Chü-i! Waley noted that in 1918 the only copy of Po Chü-i in the British Museum was a seventeenth century Japanese edition (170 CP 89).

Another way to understand Waley's choices is to consider the plays he translated by category, according to the chart below. The purpose here is to give a sense of where Waley's emphasis lay, and I think the chart makes this clear. The numbers refer to the total number of plays in that category in the modern

repertoire of the Yôkyoku Nihyakugojûbanshû (The Collection of Two Hundred and Fifty No; actually, there are 253). An asterix appears beside the plays in the chart that were previously translated into English:

I: Gods (43)	II: Warriors (16)	III: Women (47)	IV: Mad Persons (97)	V: Demons (50)
<u>Haku Rakuten</u>	<u>Atsumori</u> <u>Ikuta (Atsumori)</u> * <u>Tsunemasa</u>	* <u>Hagoromo</u>	<u>Hashi Benkei</u> * <u>Kagekiyo</u> <u>Hachi no Ki</u> <u>Sotoba Komachi</u> <u>Aya no Tsuzumu</u> * <u>Aoi no Ue</u> * <u>Kantan</u> <u>Hôka Priests</u> <u>Hatsuyuki</u>	* <u>Kumasaka</u> <u>Eboshiori</u> <u>Ukai</u> <u>Tanikô</u> <u>Ikenie</u>

There are of course problems with this categorization, the main one being that Waley didn't follow it; Ikenie, moreover, is not included in this collection at all. It is also conceivable that Waley, like Tyler (1), chose only plays whose literary value appealed to him, regardless of their category. Another important observation that can be made is that Waley (re)translated five of the plays that had appeared in Fenollosa and Pound's Noh, obviously with the aim of superseding them.<sup>47</sup> It can be observed that category four plays are by far the most numerous (97 of 253), and Waley translated nine of them (9 of 97). He appears to have avoided God Plays and Women Plays, except for Haku Rakuten and Hagoromo, respectively, and translated a greater proportion of the Warrior Plays (3 of 16) and Demon Plays (5 of 50).

Overall, the chart shows that Waley tended towards those plays which are said to be the most "actively dramatic" (category four) or "wild and volatile"

<sup>47</sup> Pinnington claims there are six, but Sotoba Komachi (Waley) and Kayoi Komachi (Pound) are different plays ("Arthur Waley and the Nô (II)": 2).

(category five). He no doubt felt that such plays would be the ones most likely to have the widest appeal for a popular Western audience accustomed to dramatic realism on the stage. A preference for plays that are either "actively dramatic" or textually appealing as poetry, however, shows a certain unfamiliarity or uneasiness with No as a performance of song and dance. Not having seen a No play, Waley lacked a sensual or visual feeling for the No; for instance, he points out that the No "relied enormously for its effects on gorgeous and elaborate costumes," though a few lines later he says that "it would be tedious to describe the various costumes" (31). His discussion of No playtexts, on the other hand, no doubt of considerable interest to scholars, carries on for five pages. He concludes his introduction by comparing his translations to black and white photographs, and "the reader must colour them by the exercise of his own imagination" (55). Certainly Waley experienced the No through his own imagination.

Because Waley never saw a No play, the No was for him, as for Yeats and Pound, an "imaginary theatre." Like most of his Victorian predecessors he received the No textually, as literature, and translated it as such. This partly explains why he did not translate the last scene of Taniko, whose "chief feature," Masaki Dômoto tells us, "is the brilliant spectacle of the god's appearance and his dance-like movements," which have more appeal as a performance than as literature. "The Western translator," Dômoto continues, "could not imagine the three-dimensional qualities of the conclusion [of Taniko]" with only a reading of the script (146). Aware of this serious shortcoming, Waley inserted as an appendix to his Nô Plays a letter from Japan from his friend Oswald Sickert to Charles Ricketts in which Sickert described with great appreciation his experience of a No performance (306-15). Waley thus experiences the No vicariously, through Sickert, though it can only be regretted that he did not witness a performance with his own eyes, for it surely would have influenced his literary



translations and his overall estimation of the No as a multifaceted art. As the epigraph which begins this chapter suggests, Waley's estimation of the No was high, but qualified, as he was unable to rid himself of the very Victorian assumption that the world's greatest art had been produced in ancient Greece, long ago.

An aspect of the No theatre of particular interest to Waley, and that Waley knew would be of keen interest to many of his closest friends was homoeroticism. In spite of his argument that No had been a popular art of 'the people,' Waley recognized that No became an exclusive art of the samurai. What was this extraordinary brotherhood of deeply cultured men? As a Fabian at Cambridge, Waley had heard from H. G. Wells and the Webbs a great deal about the samurai: their supposed virtue, nobility, selfless sacrifice for the state, and their asexuality. Other associates, however, provided Waley with a very different picture of the samurai. One of Waley's mentors at Cambridge who later became a close friend was the homosexual socialist G. Lowes Dickinson, who had journeyed to India, China and Japan in 1912-13 on an Albert Khan travelling fellowship. He was joined in India by E. M. Forster, whose Passage to India (1924) was partly inspired by this trip. Dickinson's journey resulted in a travel book called Appearances (1914), in which he described the Japanese as "the Greeks of the East": "No nations were ever more virile than the Greeks or the Italians. . . . And none have been, or are, more virile than the Japanese. That they have the delicacy of women, too, does not alter the fact" (118).

Just how Dickinson was able to appraise this samurai virility remains a mystery, though a clue may be found in his Essay on the Civilizations of India, China, and Japan (1914), the official record of the journey: "The costume of the [Japanese] men, leaving bare the legs and arms, and their perfect proportions and

development, were a constant delight to me. The most Hellenic thing I ever saw was a group of Japanese youths practicing jiu-jitsu naked under the trees of a temple garden, or by moonlight on the seashore" (64). Japan seems a veritable homoerotic paradise, and it was *there*, unlike ancient Greece, which existed largely in the imagination. The 'effeminate' samurai Dickinson called "Japanese stoics," as they were also "artists and poets. Their earliest painters were feudal lords, and it was feudal lords who fostered and acted the No dances. If Nietzsche had known Japan . . . he would surely have found in these Daimyos and Samurai the forerunners of his Superman" (Appearances 120-1).

Dickinson and Forster were close friends of Edward Carpenter (1844-1929), another committed but far more outspoken socialist and homosexual who, as mentioned in chapter two, had greatly influenced the socialism of Ben Keeling, founder of the Cambridge Fabians; to some extent, therefore, his influence extended to Arthur Waley as well. Carpenter, as Hugh David has written,

did more than expand the concept and vocabulary of Edwardian sexuality. Until very shortly before his death in 1929 he was a unique link between the then emerging British Modernism and the *avant-garde* of half a century earlier--the Fellowship of the New Life; H. G. Wells, Sidney and Beatrice Webb and the proto-socialist Fabian Society; William Morris and the Arts and Crafts movement. (49)

"He was a believer in the Love of Comrades," added E. M. Forster (qtd. in David 50). "A broad cross-section of the emerging intelligentsia of the Left headed north [to Millthorpe in Derbyshire, Carpenter's country home]," David continues, "in search of 'a blessed physician for body, soul, and spirit.' . . . D. H. Lawrence, George Bernard Shaw, Bertrand Russell and Rupert Brooke all arrived in the hope of enlightenment" (51). It is uncertain whether Arthur Waley was among his friends who went to Carpenter for (homo)sexual healing, but if we recall Waley's

paper on "Relationships" given to the Fabians in which he defended sodomy as the "passionate love of comrades," we can infer that Waley was familiar with the Carpenter philosophy (see p. 57).

Carpenter had privately published a pamphlet called Homogenic Love, and its Place in a Free Society in 1895, the year that Oscar Wilde went to trial, where his defense of the "comradely love" was made on the grounds of its literary and historical prevalence (Tsuzuki 131). In 1908, Carpenter published his successful and very influential Intermediate Sex which established his "international reputation as an expert in the field" (Tsuzuki 147). There he not only defended the normality of homosexuality, but praised it for its unique virtues: "there is an organic connection between the homosexual temperament and unusual psychic or divinatory powers," he wrote, pointing out that homosexuals adopted extraordinary vocations, becoming "seers, healers, or teachers of esoteric arts" (qtd. in Tsuzuki 146). The Intermediate Sex was widely admired and Carpenter received letters of praise and thanks from, among others, Ferdinand Schiller, Siegfried Sassoon, and Robert Graves (Tsuzuki 147-8). He also became a hero of Bloomsbury for his "forthright homoeroticism," and exerted considerable personal and literary influence on Forster (Reed 199-203). As Forster's biographer, P. N. Furbank, wrote, "Carpenter was a healer, who worked through personal and physical contact" (257).

In 1914, Carpenter published his Intermediate Types among Primitive Folk. One of these 'primitive folk' to which Carpenter devoted an entire chapter was the samurai of Japan. Carpenter first discussed the image of the samurai as portrayed by Lafcadio Hearn, Inazo Nitobe (Bushido: The Soul of Japan, 1899), and A. B. Mitford. None of these writers had said anything about love among the samurai, though Nitobe had written of "the stories of the Samurai. The peasants round the open fire in their huts never tire of repeating the

achievements of Yoshitsune and his faithful retainer Benkei," whose relationship, Carpenter pointed out, was "the love of a man for the youth that fought at his side; or rather their mutual love for each other" (144-5). To be clear about this love, Carpenter cited a "Suyewo Iwaya" (Sazanami Iwaya [1870-1933]), who wrote an article entitled "Comrade-Love in Japan" (1902) in a German publication, Jahrbuch für Homosexuelle Zwischenstufen:

From 1200 A. D. onwards the Samurai became prominent in Japan. To them it seemed more manly and heroic that men should love men and consort with them, than to give themselves over to women. . . . Almost every knight sought out a youth who should be worthy of him . . . If one reads *Nanshok-Okagami* [sic] (a series of tales on this subject by Saikak [sic], a celebrated novelist of the 17th century) one will find plenty of stories of this sort. (qtd. in Carpenter 147-8)<sup>48</sup>

Several pages later Nanshoku Okagami is finally translated as "The Great Mirror of Man's Love" (155), a work now well-known and widely regarded as a canonical work of Japanese literature, though writers like Aston had found even its title "too gross for quotation" (History 268).

But in a privately printed book called Intimate Tales of Old Japan (1929), the writers complained that Carpenter had romanticized what was simply pederasty: "whatever the affectional basis of the relation may have been, it had its physical side as well" (Huggins and Shimizu 127). This overlooked Carpenter's purpose, which was not to provide a detailed account of homosexual practice in Japan but to legitimize and ennoble homosexuality in England by locating it within the

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<sup>48</sup> Carpenter translated directly from Iwaya's article in German, "Nan sho k', Die Päderastie in Japan"; hence, the transcription of nanshok (nanshoku) and Saikak (Saikaku). Iwaya's involvement with the editor of the Jahrbuch für Homosexuelle Zwischenstufen, Magnus Hirschfeld, is discussed by Matthew Königsberg in "Imported Taboos: How Modern Japanese Critics deal with Iharu Saikaku's Gay Legacy." Publication forthcoming in Errinern und Wiederentdecken. Berlin: Verlag, 1999. Like Carpenter in England, it appears as though Hirschfeld was struggling to legitimize homosexuality in Germany by pointing to its normality in the cultural history of Japan.

highest political and cultural institutions of England's military ally, who in several ways; as we saw in chapter one, England hoped to imitate. Nanshoku among the samurai thus confirms "the lofty standard of honour represented by Bushido," and "has contributed not a little to the marvelous results of their late war with Russia--why then one can hardly reject as unjustifiable the opinion that this love is more likely to encourage manly bearing than to stand in the way of the same" (159-60). It is clear that Carpenter went about as far as he could for the time and still managed to get published; descriptions more graphic might well have landed him in jail. As it was, Unwin was threatened with prosecution, and only just managed to convince police that it was "a harmless scientific work" (Tsuzuki 150).

In The Nô Plays of Japan Waley proceeds cautiously, first establishing the legendary and 'sexual' origin of No: "Its origin is traced to the occasion when, in order to lure the Sun-god from his cave, the Goddess Uzume 'bared her breasts, let down her skirt and danced. Then the Gods laughed till the high plains of Heaven shook'" (5). Waley has changed the sex of the sun-goddess, Amaterasu Ômikami, from female to male! He thus ascribes a (hetero)sexual significance to a myth where arguably none actually exists. This form of textual erasure, or gender "cross-writing," Marty Roth explains, is a common homosexual strategy of "displacement," the usual objective being to render literature more universal or acceptable to a dominant heterosexual society (270-3). We have already seen Waley manipulating pronouns in Japanese poetry for personal reasons, what Ricor Norton calls "pronoun pathology" (qtd. in Roth 273). But Waley then uses material from the Uji Shûi Monogatari (ca. 1190-1242) to suggest that early sarugaku became an erotic entertainment between men: "Iyetsuna proposed to his brother that they should pull up their skirts and, showing their bare legs in the bright glare of the courtyard fire, should run round it, singing:

Later and later grows the night,  
 Keener and keener grows the cold;  
 I will lift up my petticoats  
 And warm my *fuguri* at the fire. (15)<sup>49</sup>

Waley comments that such performances were "licentious buffoonery" and "indecent charade" (16), which William MacDuff interprets as Waley's disapproval of overt homoeroticism in favour of the more spiritual and "serious dramatic performance" of later No (256). Waley certainly sounds here a little bit like Aston. But MacDuff does not bother to inquire why Waley included this odd passage at all, or why all of the plays he cites in his essay "Beautiful Boys in No Drama" were translated by Waley. Waley was fastidious and, "terrified of England's anti-homosexual laws" (see ch. 2), took the more Carpenterian or romantic approach of locating what Watanabe calls "the homosexual theatre of the middle ages" in a high spiritual and sociocultural context (12). He then quietly and surreptitiously translates--without drawing unnecessary attention to his choices or explaining his reasons for making them-- a good selection of No plays that narrate events in the lives of famous Japanese chigo and wakashu (young boy and male adolescent, respectively, terms that designate the "object of pederastic love," according to Watanabe [47]).

The first three plays in Waley's Nô Plays are about the young Taira princes Atsumori and Tsunemasa, who are mourned in Japanese epics for their early deaths and lost beauty. The next three are devoted to Ushiwaka, or Yoshitsune, the famous boy-warrior companion of Benkei mentioned by Carpenter who was celebrated for his "androgynous beauty" (MacDuff 253). Most of these plays, as well as Tanikô, Kantan, Ikenie, and plays requiring young shite to take the part of women (Kagekiyo, Hatsuyuki), presented the opportunity to exhibit before the

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<sup>49</sup> Fuguri are testicles.

Shogun and other samurai audiences the special charms of young male actors, the yûgen inherent in "the natural grace of a boy's movements," says Waley (21). "The stars were without exception beautiful young men," Watanabe writes (49), and samurai appreciation was not exclusively aesthetic, as Waley recognized: "The Shôgun's relations with [Zeami] seem from the first to have been very intimate" (19). Waley then cites a passage from a diary of the period to make clear that this intimacy was sexual: "For some while Big Tree (i.e. Yoshimitsu) has been making a favorite of a Sarugaku-boy from Yamato, sharing the same mat and eating from the same vessels. These Sarugaku people are mere mendicants, but he treats them with as much esteem as if they were Privy Counsellors" (19). Yoshimitsu's relations with Zeami were not disapproved of because they were homosexual, but because they were inter-class. Interestingly, "class-transcendent male eroticism" was precisely the alternative model proposed by Carpenter and taken up by Forster in Maurice, according to Christopher Reed (210). Yoshimitsu, then, becomes a 'gay' samurai hero of whom Carpenter and Dickinson (and Bloomsbury) would have approved, for he was a great patron of the arts, and in loving Zeami he disregarded class distinctions, placing aesthetics over ethics in his system of values.

Waley's point now appears to have been made, but he exhibits a particular fascination with this area of Zeami's life, quoting a longer and more explicit passage from Zeami himself on the subject:

The Lord Roku-on-in (i.e. Yoshimitsu) had a mistress named Takahashi. She was skilled in ten thousand arts of love and made it her business to please him. . . . By this devoted attention to his welfare she had raised herself to a position of importance. . . . After this lady's death every one recommended Seami as one particularly qualified for such a situation. (qtd. in Waley 20)

And Zeami in turn raised himself with his various arts and skills to a position of importance. Indeed, the moment at which he became a boy favourite of Yoshimitsu is the moment when the No begins to receive its crucial aristocratic patronage, the "turning point in Japanese dramatic history," after which "its religious purpose [is] clearly subordinated to that of entertainment;" entertainment undoubtedly both aesthetic and homoerotic (Hare 13).

Homoeroticism is not immediately apparent in Waley's translations; the yûgen inherent in "the natural grace of a boy's movements" for the most part must be imagined, and fantasy plays on the "beautiful young men" acting the many parts of boys and women in Waley's Nô Plays. An indication of the effectiveness of this beauty is given by Oswald Sickert in his letter to Charles Ricketts, cited in Waley's text. Sickert describes an evening of No with the actor Baikô playing the part of three different women, including Shizuka in Funa Benkei. So convincing was Baikô that "I shall not again ever so much care about a beautiful woman taken by a beautiful woman," declared Sickert (308). Waley's translation of Benkei on the Bridge also gives some indication of the passionate relationships that existed between boys and older men. Ushiwaka is a boy of twelve or thirteen, "as nimble as a bird or a butterfly," writes Waley (115). Benkei describes Ushiwaka as having "a woman's form" and is quite clearly attracted to him; his response to Ushiwaka's androgynous beauty is telling: "Then, because he [Benkei] had left the World, with troubled mind he hurried on" (118). Benkei's mind is troubled because, as a priest who has left the world, he is not supposed to experience sexual desire. Eventually, however, he succumbs to Ushiwaka's charms in an exclamation, "Oh, marvellous youth!" Thereafter Benkei "surrender[s] himself" and becomes Ushiwaka's servant, obviously then breaking his priestly vows (120). The play ends with Benkei and Ushiwaka leaving for Ushiwaka's home.



The homosexual performance of No drama has been relegated for the most part to history. What was only a pre-Meiji form of entertainment for a military caste that regarded passionate male relationships as profoundly moving has been transformed into a modern and sophisticated form of high Art. Waley was the first English writer, to my knowledge, to draw attention to this element of No that is still often overlooked and is seldom discussed. Native informants almost certainly played a role in obfuscating what became an embarrassment for Japan in an age when so much effort was being given over to impressing Victorian England. It was easy to simply blame all that vulgarity on the lowly kabuki. But Waley discovered and made clear the crucial importance to the No of Zeami, and Zeami's relationship with the most powerful patron in the land that secured for the No its place in history.

Before closing this chapter, some reference must be made to Waley's treatment of Zen in his Nô Plays. Waley foreshadows the popular Japanese scholar Daisetz Suzuki in his coupling of the No drama with Zen Buddhism. "It is obvious that Seami was deeply imbued with the teachings of Zen, in which cult Yoshimitsu may have been his master," writes Waley. "The difficult term *yûgen* which occurs constantly in the *Works* is derived from Zen literature." Waley then points to a passage in Zeami's Fûshikaden that apparently "shows his Zen training" (21-2). This overemphasis on Zen in the No represents a misunderstanding on Waley's part of Zeami and yûgen and therefore, to some extent, of the No drama as well. It obfuscates the fact that Zeami drew on concepts from Shinto, Taoism, Confucianism, and other types of Buddhism, and that his artistic master was not Yoshimitsu but Nijô Yoshimoto (1320-1388), the renowned waka (Japanese poetry) and renga (linked verse) poet and member of the Japanese aristocracy. It is almost certainly through Yoshimoto that Zeami became acquainted with yûgen, which derived not from Zen but from late Heian

court poetry. It was first propounded by Shunzei Fujiwara, (Teika Fujiwara [1114-1204]), who completely altered the term from its religious source and ascribed to it a poetic meaning of "elegant and mysterious beauty" (Hare 30). As Thomas Hare has written, Yoshimoto "seems to have had a profound influence on Zeami's literary style and is credited with much of Zeami's education in the Japanese classics" (17). As for Zen, references to it in the Fûshikaden consulted by Waley are "used merely for illustration and are not intellectually indispensable," according to Tsutomu Kôsai, and Hare concurs that "it seems a bit exaggerated to assume that Zeami's dramatic theories, not to mention his plays, have some privileged connection to Zen" (qtd in Hare 30-1). Waley almost acknowledges as much later in the "Note on Buddhism," though he continues to argue that "Zen was the religion of artists," and "it was in the language of Zen that poetry and painting were discussed," again highlighting Zen and overshadowing or ignoring other important influences and traditions in the No (59).

The "cult of Zen" referred to by Waley was perhaps less one of the period in which Zeami lived than a cult of the period in which Waley himself lived, for only very recently had it been revived by the Meiji New Buddhists and propagated in the West (see Sharf, Victoria, Heisig). This brings into question Waley's use of "the recent researches of Japanese scholars" to which evidently much of his information was indebted. Waley appears to have relied on this material without sufficiently investigating the historical and ideological context in which it was produced. What were Waley's sources? He refers vaguely in Nô Plays to Japanese writers in the Yôkyokukai, but his knowledge of Zen probably came from sources he identified in a work published the following year (1922) entitled, Zen Buddhism and its Relation to Art. There he refers his English readers to Kakuzo Okakura's Book of Tea (1906) and to Kaiten Nukariya's Religion of the Samurai (1913). Okakura was discussed briefly in chapter one (pp.

27-8; also footnote 13). Kaiten Nukariya (1867-1934) was a Sôtô priest and personal friend of Daisetz Suzuki (1870-1966). He argued in Religion of the Samurai that only in Japan is Buddhism still alive, that the ethic of Zen is essentially identical with bushidô, and that Zen *was* yamatodamashii (the spirit of the Japanese). In other words, Zen was usurped and transformed into an ethic of imperial conquest and a foundation for Japanese nationalist claims of spiritual and cultural superiority.

Among Waley's Japanese sources we can identify Sôen Shaku (1859-1919), who "played a pivotal role in the export of Zen to the West" (Sharf 112; 'Sôyen' in Waley 30). Sôen was a university-educated intellectual who became the first Zen master to travel to America. He made tours of Japanese colonial territories in Asia and preached Buddhist sermons that contained 'spiritual defences' of Japanese military aggression; one such lecture series was entitled "The Spirit of the Yamato Race" (qtd. in Victoria 60). Sôen was the teacher of Daisetz Suzuki, the man who has done more than any other single person to popularize Zen in the West and draw every aspect of Japanese culture--including the No--under its umbrella, what Robert Sharf calls the "Zen appropriation of the finest artistic products of Japan," an appropriation that was "blatantly ideological and historically dubious" (134).<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> It is unfortunate that Yoko Chiba in her dissertation "Yeats and the Nô: From Japonisme to Zen" should have relied so heavily for her interpretation of the No on the ideas of Suzuki, who published primarily in the 30s and 40s. She also attempted to explain "the role of Zen's negation in Noh" using the "lucid analysis" of Tetsurô Watsuji, who published in 1933 (190-1). Both Suzuki and Watsuji were quintessential nihonjinron scholars whose studies on Zen are inseparable from the politics of Japanese nationalism and represent a kind of reverse orientalism; that is, the reappropriation from the West of Japan as exotic--and spiritually and culturally superior--object. So Chiba writes, "Zen, the essential element of Noh performance, governed all the arts of the Muromachi Period (1338-1568) and Momoyama Period (1568-1600), and throughout the seventeenth century. Noh, the Tea Ceremony, garden designing, flower arrangement, sumie . . . , renga . . . , haiku, calligraphy, swordsmanship, architecture, and crafts; all these embody that Zen culture, and many of them are still vibrant today. The Noh theatre, as a total art, is the foremost artistic expression of that culture. The influence of Zen on the Japanese mind and culture since has been so complete that it reached the point where Daisetz Suzuki could say, 'Zen is the Japanese character'" (187).

It would be going too far to suggest that Waley subscribed to this extreme Japanese nationalist ideology. I would argue that in this case Waley was more of a medium through whom contemporary Japanese interpretations of Zen were transmitted. According to Sharf, Waley shares, along with Suzuki and Shin'ichi Hisamatsu (1889-1980), the "dubious honor of popularizing the notion that Zen is the foundation of virtually all of the Japanese fine arts" (133). Waley's views were tempered by the depth of his knowledge of classical Zen scriptures and Chinese literature, and he "stops well short of claiming that Zen is the creative force behind Japanese culture" (Sharf 156), but the phrase "cult of Zen" employed in Nô Plays was probably derived from Nukariya's Religion of the Samurai which contains a chapter called "The Zen Cult in Japan." The romantic phrase "soul of No" used in Nô Plays, and the romantic and curious comparison of Zen with Quakerism in "Zen Buddhism," may have been suggested by Nitobe's Bushido: The Soul of Japan. Nitobe was himself a Christian who married an American Quaker and traveled widely in Europe and North America promoting his concept of "cultural internationalism." As Thomas Burkman has written, "one of Quakerism's primary attractions to Nitobe was its mysticism, productive as a link between Oriental thought and Christianity" (199). In the conclusion of his book Nitobe ponders the future of bushidô in hyperbolic language that erupts into English poetry:

Ages after, when [bushidô's] customaries will have been buried and its very name forgotten, its odours will come floating in the air as from a far-off, unseen hill, "the wayside gaze beyond";--then in the beautiful language of the Quaker poet,

'The traveller owns the grateful sense  
Of sweetness near, he knows not whence,  
And, pausing, takes with forehead bare

The benediction of the air.' (qtd. in Victoria 97)

This is not the sort of verse that appealed to Waley, but Waley's own notion of Zen "as a purer Quakerism," the "Buddha consciousness of Zen" corresponding to the "Universal Consciousness which . . . lies hid beneath the personal Consciousness," seems no less romantic, and no less influential on a generation who accepted as truth the pronouncements of an orientalist of Waley's stature ("Zen" 25).

Zen Buddhism and its Relation to Art was republished as chapter seventeen of Waley's Introduction to the Study of Chinese Painting (1923), but otherwise, and fortunately, Waley's attention was diverted away from the No drama and from a near-mystical encounter with Zen by a text that has had a far greater influence over almost every Japanese art since its appearance almost a thousand years ago. The Tale of Genji is the subject of chapter five.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> It should be noted here that Waley wrote an article in 1955 entitled "History and Religion" in which he attacked Suzuki for drawing the West toward Zen with his "non-rational approach" and for removing Zen to a realm outside of history: "The current interest in and comfort derived from Zen in America and Europe are due almost solely to [Suzuki's] writings. None of the defects in them which scholars have noted in any way detract from their efficacy as propaganda . . . to him (Suzuki) 'Zen is above space-time relations and naturally above historical facts'. If this were really so, the proper course for Suzuki to take would seem to be to avoid history altogether. . . . But is the attitude that Zen is 'above historical facts' really a Zen attitude at all and not, rather, a personal prejudice?" (176). Waley appears to have recovered from his own mystical encounter with Zen, but Suzuki's influence, as Waley recognized, was pervasive.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### Whose Golden Age? The Tale of The Tale of Genji

Any romance of 1000 A. D. would be curious rather than interesting. When it happens to be Japanese, if not precisely impossible, it is difficult to appreciate.

(NY Times Rev. of The Tale of Genji. Trans. Kenchô Suematsu, 1882)

While the Aelfrics and the Aelfreds croaked and coughed in England, this court lady . . . was sitting down in her silk dress and trousers with pictures before her and the sound of poetry in her ears, with flowers in her garden and nightingales in the trees, with all day to talk in and all night to dance in--she was sitting down about the year 1000 to tell the story of the life and adventures of Prince Genji.

(Virginia Woolf, Rev. of The Tale of Genji. Trans. Arthur Waley, 1925)

In the late 1920s, most literary young people whom I knew were under the spell of *The Tale of Genji*. The six volumes of Arthur Waley's translation were . . . an intense aesthetic experience.

(C. P. Snow, Rev. of The Tale of Genji. Trans. Edward Seidensticker, 1976)

If Waley had stopped translating Japanese literature after his Nô Plays it is likely that he would be remembered today as only a minor translator of that literature. As it was, his next translation from the Japanese, which was to occupy him for about twelve years from 1921 to 1933, was of what many claim is the greatest work of Japanese literature, what Kenchô Suematsu in 1882 had called "a national treasure" (ix). Indeed, Waley's own reception of Japanese literature--and that of his readers--went from cool to warm to positively ecstatic as he proceeded from Japanese Poetry to Nô Plays to The Tale of Genji. Whereas Japanese poetry had to be appreciated in the original, and no single No play was "so complete a poem as the tragedies of Sophocles," in the Genji he had found what he told his publisher Sir Stanley Unwin was "one of the two or three greatest novels ever

written" (Unwin 193). As a translator whose "youth was occupied in writing stories," recreating The Tale of Genji as English literature was the fulfillment of a personal quest ("A.W. in Conversation" 151).

How or why Waley thought he was reading a novel, however, is an interesting question, since monogatari does not simply conform to the Western category of 'novel.' As H. Richard Okada writes, "to demand that *monogatari* texts conform to categories and strategies well known to us today, including the isolation of "masterpieces," and then to proceed with analyses as if those categories were self-evident and in need of no further questioning would be to participate in a form of appropriation (even colonization)" (2). It is certainly true that Waley 'appropriated' the Genji Monogatari, and in translating it was more faithful to what he believed were the exotic and erotic demands of Western readers (including himself) than to the author, Murasaki Shikibu. The Tale of Genji had already been presented to Western readers in 1882 as a 'masterpiece' and a 'romance' by Suematsu, but Waley felt free to recreate the Tale and present it to contemporary readers as a modern novel.<sup>52</sup> I believe Waley, like Suematsu, was trying to make a case against more overt forms of political colonization by challenging the prevailing view in Europe that European culture, by all accepted 'natural' laws, was simply superior or more advanced than any other; such is the ground on which imperialism is usually defended.

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<sup>52</sup> In his article "The Originality of Japanese Civilization" (1929), Waley refers to "that most supremely original of all Japanese inventions--the discovery of the psychological novel" (771). Strangely enough in 1926 he had stated, "if we compare it with Stendhal, with Tolstoy, with Proust, *The Tale of Genji* appears by contrast to possess little more psychological complication than a Grimm's fairy tale" (qtd. in Morris, Madly Singing 327). It is difficult to say how or why Waley changed his mind; perhaps in 1926 he had not yet read the final chapters which are quite psychologically dramatic (e.g. Ukifune's dementia); perhaps he decided later that it would be more advantageous to locate his achievement in the mainstream of literary modernism. In his introduction to the final volume (1933) he settled the matter by stating that the Genji contained "elements of which some do not occur in Europe till the twentieth century, some dropped out centuries ago, while others have not figured in our European pattern at all" (Bridge of Dreams 24). Waley has covered all the bases with his pre-modern, modern, and post-modern creation!

Waley had clearly found in Murasaki much of what he felt he needed to express his own voice which, we have seen, was otherwise so conspicuously silent. A typical orientalist analysis might suggest that the Western male translator had appropriated the language and voice of the translated 'oriental,' allowing him/her to speak, though only through the translator's 'superior' (European) language; such was the attitude of nineteenth century translators like William Jones and Richard Burton (see Mostow, "Translating Imperialism"; Said, Orientalism, respectively). It may be argued that in Waley's case the opposite is equally true: Murasaki had allowed Waley to speak, to express in prose the sentiments and emotions that may otherwise have been suppressed or displaced elsewhere. Just as Lytton Strachey revealed his "convoluted sexuality" in his art, commenting that "the whole of Art consists in the ability to pulverize the material and remould it in the shape of one's own particular absurdity" (qtd. in Spurr 35), so Waley moulded The Tale of Genji into his own modern aesthetic English novel which reveals his own "particular absurdity." Moreover, Waley becomes the medium, or pundit, through whom Suematsu's mission of establishing in Europe a Japanese writer as one of the world's 'great' artists is at last successful, and a new respect and admiration in the West for Japanese culture and civilization follows.

Waley's translation of the Genji is not experimental in form, yet it presented to a contemporary Western audience a vision or fantasy of an alternative order, of everything that the modern West was not: a non-industrial peaceful society in which natural beauty, the arts and human relations appeared more important than politics or 'progress,' and without a hint of militarism, almost an idealized England at some imagined golden moment of the past, certainly pre-1914. Waley's Genji might be called a romantic escape in prose from the aftershock of war and what Lafcadio Hearn called the "monstrous machine-



world of Western life" (625).<sup>53</sup> For Waley personally, the Genji was a release into a realm of aestheticism, and the promotion of that aesthetic realm in Western culture. As Susan Sontag argued some years ago, "homosexuals have pinned their integration into society on promoting the aesthetic sense" (290). In Waley's translation, Genji's is a depoliticized, aristocratic world of delicate manners and highly cultivated aesthetic tastes, a sort of catalogue in prose of japanoiseries, "so fortuitously consonant with the ideals of Bloomsbury" (Ury "Complete Genji" 183).<sup>54</sup> Of course, taken as it was so far out of the historical and social context in which it was written, Waley's Genji gives little indication of the complexity of the relationship of the Genji Monogatari to socio-historical Japanese reality; far from apolitical, the original Genji has been called by Haruo Shirane an "aesthetics of power" (Part 1). Certainly the relationship between Waley's Genji and the Genji Monogatari is tenuous, but from a post-war European perspective, the more tenuous this relationship the better: not only is it then an escape from the nightmare of European history, it is an escape from history altogether. As one Western reviewer said, "part of the charm of the story is no doubt due to our complete unfamiliarity with the world in which it takes place. It is a refreshment and a delight to be transported into an atmosphere and a society which remind us of nothing we have ever known" (Rev. of WC, New Statesman 572).

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<sup>53</sup> Mulk Raj Anand in his Conversations in Bloomsbury (1981) claimed to have been introduced by Laurence Binyon to Arthur Waley, who Binyon apparently called "the successor of Lafcadio Hearn" (84). If Raj Anand's recollection of the conversation is accurate--and of that I have serious doubts--Binyon could only have been speaking ironically. My sense, however, is that Raj Anand constructed imaginary conversations, taking into account critical perspectives that were only available much later; for instance, he asks Waley when his Genji is coming out (84), after which the conversation makes evident that it already has, and Raj Anand has either read it or is familiar with most of the critical views of the 30s and 40s... but Raj Anand says in his preface that his visit to London took place in the early 20s.

<sup>54</sup> Ury's vague notion of 'Bloomsbury ideals' suggests an erroneous image of Bloomsbury members as tired and withdrawn upper-class aesthetes, and takes no account of the variety of those ideals or of the Group's members' profoundly idealistic engagements in contemporary socialist and feminist politics.

In this chapter I am less concerned with the actual world in which the Genji Monogatari takes place, than with the Western world that warmly received The Tale of Genji and avidly indulged in its "intense aesthetic experience." I am arguing here that Waley's Genji is an English novel in its own right that needs to be located in its proper context, which is not the eleventh century A. D. but the modern period in Britain between the wars. Part one of this chapter will present a brief critical reception in the West of the Genji that shows how it was read as a modern English novel, and how it also noticeably altered contemporary perceptions of Japan. So popular was Waley's Genji, as we will see, that even after a more complete and accurate translation by Edward Seidensticker appeared in 1976, Waley's version remained, and still remains, in print.<sup>55</sup> To a large extent I believe this was because of the high literary quality of Waley's style, what Raymond Mortimer called "the most beautiful English prose of our time" (qtd. in Morris, "AW" 51). In part two of this chapter, I shall discuss the special features and attractions of Waley's style and attempt to locate it within contemporary debates on appropriate literary language. I shall also discuss here the question of (homo)eroticism in the Genji and Waley's displaced homoerotic desire, for the character Genji is, as Ury recognized, "more than a second self" for Waley ("Some Notes" 27). Genji, we shall see, is an interesting post-war male hero who challenges Victorian-Edwardian constructions of masculinity. Finally, some reference must be made to Waley's influential but questionable construction of Heian society as essentially aesthetic; not an entirely untrue perspective, but one that presents the ideal rather than the real picture.

Before Waley began reading the Genji Monogatari in 1921, the few Western Japanologists who had read, or had attempted to read, this classical Japanese text

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<sup>55</sup> Waley's Genji is still available in an edition by Tuttle published in Japan.

had dismissed it as an obscure, uninteresting work. Basil Hall Chamberlain had dismissed it in 1905 as "dull" and "long-winded" (294). Sir Ernest Satow had also found the Genji to be "devoid of interest," and "only of value as marking a stage in the development of the language" (qtd. in Chamberlain 1905: 294). William G. Aston, translator of the Nihongi, and widely regarded as the reigning expert of Japanese literature, said in 1899 that the Genji was of interest mainly to historians of the Japanese language, and though Japanese critics had claimed the Genji "deserves to be ranked with the masterpieces of European literature," Aston felt there was no way we could place Murasaki "on a level with Fielding, Thackeray, Victor Hugo, Dumas, and Cervantes" (History 96-7).

Strangely enough, this opinion is contrary to the one Aston appears to have held just a year earlier when he had read a paper before the Japan Society on "The Classical Literature of Japan." Then he had argued that the Genji had not "received justice at the hands either of the translator (Suematsu) or of European critics," and though he himself had not read more than a small part of "this portentously long romance," he called Murasaki "the Richardson of Japan." He was then confident enough to state that "as a picture of a long past state of society, there is nothing in the contemporary European literature to compare with it," and "if we remember that it was written long before Chaucer, Dante, and Boccaccio shone on the horizon of European literature, it will appear a truly remarkable performance" ("Classical" 281-3). It is difficult to say what caused Aston to change his mind so suddenly, though I suspect that his earlier public praise of the Genji was made out of respect for Japanese dignitaries who were probably present at the Japan Society meeting, and of whose high opinion of the Genji Monogatari Aston was no doubt aware.

As mentioned above, an earlier translation of the first seventeen chapters of the Genji by Kenchô Suematsu (Kenchio Suyematz, in contemporary

transcription) had appeared in 1882, while Suematsu was a student at Cambridge. Previously he had been Secretary to the Council of State and to the War Department, and an Attaché to the Japanese Legation in London. In these early years of Anglo-Japanese relations, we have seen that Japan was not taken very seriously by the English, and much of Suematsu's career was devoted to the creation of a more favourable and respectable image of Japan and Japanese culture (and the removal of racial and legal prejudices.) His Tale of Genji was conscripted to the political cause of impressing upon English readers images of Japanese refinement and civilization, similar to the purpose of his later books, Fantasy of Far Japan (1905) and The Risen Sun (1905). With his Tale of Genji, Suematsu was not so much "an ambitious young Japanese eager to ingratiate himself," as Ury maintained, as he was an intelligent and shrewd diplomat 'eager to ingratiate' his country to England ("Imaginary" 267).

Unfortunately, Suematsu's Genji did not impress Western readers with very much of anything. There was only a single review, to my knowledge, that of the Spectator, where it was remarked that

the story, if story it may be called, when there is not a vestige of anything like a plot, is exceedingly tedious. . . . The manners described are wholly conventional, and, excepting a few words here and there of descriptions of scenery, there is not a glimpse of nature from beginning to end. The best things in the book are the scraps of verse, which are sometimes really pretty. The translation does credit to the skill and English scholarship of Mr. Kenchio . . . (571)

The tone of condescension here indicates that we are still in the age of supreme Victorian confidence in itself, when everything Japanese was only "really pretty" but not taken too seriously. Suematsu had certainly not done credit to Murasaki, if only because he had omitted two-thirds of the original text. If manners

described seemed "wholly conventional" it was because the translator had glossed over the 'good parts' in his excessive regard for Victorian morality.

In spite of the poor review, however, Suematsu's Genji was republished in 1898, and noticed by The New York Times, whose reviewer stated that "any romance of 1000 A. D. would be curious rather than interesting. When it happens to be Japanese, if not precisely impossible, it is difficult to appreciate." One of the reasons given was that "the text carries with it innumerable verses, which are to us utterly meaningless." The review concluded with the ironic statement, "we now understand the wonderful art of Japan, but perhaps it will be never given to us to appreciate her fiction . . ." (257). Apparently Suematsu did not, as Ury suggested, understand "what it was that his readers would find pleasing," but they were pleased at any rate to note that nothing could compare with the greatness of their own literature ("Imaginary" 268).

It is not quite true that no Westerner before Waley had appreciated the Genji at all. There was one Dr. J. Ingram Bryan who wrote an article for the Japan Magazine in 1912 entitled "The Genji Monogatari," which he called "the most consummate literary achievement of Japanese history." He provided a brief summary of the story and "an example of the fluency and grace of its diction and style" in a partial translation of the second-chapter discussion between Genji and his friends on the subject of women. But he did not translate more, perhaps because he felt that no one could "hope to portray with any degree of success the artistic excellence of a literary work, by translation" (703); or perhaps it was because, as he stated elsewhere, "Japan has an extensive literature, but it is not of a nature and content that appeals to the occidental mind" (Japan from Within [1924] 228). Bryan must have been surprised by Waley's translation when it appeared the following year, for it was obviously a successful translation, and it proved to be very appealing indeed to the 'occidental mind.'

Waley's Tale of Genji was published serially in six volumes by George Allen & Unwin between 1925 and 1933, but Waley had begun translating the Genji, in the sense of reading and interpreting, as early as 1921 when he wrote his article, "An Introspective Romance," that made evident his intimate familiarity with the text. There he spoke of the "extreme and unexpected sophistication of the Genji," which he believed deserved a complete translation. In the meantime he magnanimously recommended the "resurrection" of Suematsu's fragmentary version which was to suffice until his own task was begun (287).

Stanley Unwin's decision to publish the Genji was probably made on the basis of the success of Waley's A Hundred and Seventy Chinese Poems, which he had not published, as Unwin's "main interests, reflected in his lists [of authors], remained serious works of scholarship, with some topical relevance or at least with the possibility of wide sale." He did not usually publish literature. He had published books by conscientious objectors to World War I, "in the face of much public hostility" (Denniston 1031). He had strong links with the Fabian Socialists and in the inter-war years published many left-wing books, including the work of Harold Laski, Leon Trotsky, and Bertrand Russell's The Practice and Theory of Bolshevism (1920). He also published several Indian authors, including Gandhi. The Tale of Genji could hardly have had a socialist appeal; Waley himself, in an unpublished review of Ivan Morris' World of the Shining Prince (1964), remarked that the Genji was "not a work that one would expect Marxists to encourage" (377). But the Genji could be seen to convey an anti-war message--this was at least part of the Tale's appeal for Virginia Woolf, as we will see. And in introducing to the West one of the greatest works of the literature of the East, in presenting it as such, it appears clear that Unwin and Waley were making a case against British imperialism in Asia.

The division of the Genji into six volumes was made by Waley and does not exist in the extant text, which consists of 54 separately bound books or chapters. Waley translated only 53, leaving out chapter 38--'Suzumushi'--no doubt because he felt, as he stated in the introduction to volume six, "absolute irrelevancies creep in" that "protract uselessly a part of the book that already tends to drag" (Bridge of Dreams 11). Evidently the twelve-year task was tiring, but some of the negative comments in reviews of earlier volumes may have had an influence on his decision. Edwin Muir had said in the Nation & Athenaeum in 1927 that "the novel as a whole is more than justifiably monotonous" (802), and a review in the New Statesman in 1928 commended Waley for "pursu[ing] with unflagging patience the matter-of-fact convolutions of [Murasaki's] poorer chapters, when she writes of ceremonial family calls, religious observances decorously performed--all so much obstruction for the foreign reader's enjoyment" (197). It is a measure of the extent to which Waley was (re)creating an English novel that he evidently considered "foreign reader's enjoyment" to be more important than faithful translation.

The volumes as they appeared were The Tale of Genji (1925), The Sacred Tree (1926), A Wreath of Cloud (1927), Blue Trousers (1928), The Lady of the Boat (1932), and The Bridge of Dreams (1933).<sup>56</sup> It is hard to imagine at the end of the twentieth century, when cultural products come and go by the day, an experience of reading a single narrative over a period of eight years, and having to wait for as long as four years for another installment. Future readers would encounter The Tale of Genji as a single text to be read, perhaps, over a summer holiday or a month of evenings. Certainly some of the exasperation evident in reviews such as Muir's can be explained by an impatience for narrative closure. Still, Muir was

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<sup>56</sup> Hereafter parenthetical references to the above titles are abbreviated as, respectively, TG, ST, WC, BT, LB and BD. Since the original six-volume edition is out of print, I also provide references to the Modern Library edition which is abbreviated as ML.

an exception, for Western reviewers were otherwise overwhelmingly enthusiastic. Like their predecessors, however, they tended to search for parallels for the Genji in Western fiction, and found it necessary to rank the work, and therefore Japanese civilization, on a sort of ladder of great literature, the standard measure being of course the literature of Europe. It was Waley himself who had first compared Murasaki with Proust, thus ranking Murasaki very high indeed, for Proust was all the rage among the avant-garde in contemporary England: "many passages could be inserted in M. Proust's next volume without anybody noticing the intrusion" ("Introspective" 287).<sup>57</sup> Waley's friend Raymond Mortimer of the Nation & Athenaeum (also MacCarthy's successor as literary critic of the New Statesman) hailed the world of Genji as "a new planet," and found Murasaki most like Proust in her descriptions of "the state of mind of her characters when faced with the possibility of an event, and the state of mind resulting from it." But in her "use of atmosphere, her descriptions of overgrown gardens and dilapidated country houses, of snowy desolation and terrifying storms, Lady Murasaki positively reminds one of the Brontës" (371).

In the United States, John Carter of the New York Times called the Genji "an Eastern 'Tom Jones'" (1). The hero Genji was labeled "the Don Juan of the East" by Katherine Angell of the Saturday Review, and she compared Murasaki with Jane Austen (99; see below, footnote 72). Mark Van Doren of The Nation said in 1933 that "all the time during which Westerners have written novels they have not advanced to the combination of qualities which this Japanese lady achieved with apparent ease a thousand years ago. Even Proust could have

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<sup>57</sup> Proust's A La Recherche du Temps Perdu was not yet completely published before Proust died in November, 1922. Waley in 1921 was evidently anxiously awaiting the next volume, like so many of his contemporaries. His statement also makes it clear that he had been reading Proust in French, and was perhaps less influenced by Scott Moncrieff's translation, the first volume of which appeared in 1922, than some critics have suggested (e.g. Pinnington, "Arthur Waley, Bloomsbury Aesthetics, and *The Tale of Genji*" 53-4).



learned from her . . ." (731). Mortimer summed it up with his statement that "almost all the qualities which the European novel has been slowly gathering through the three hundred years of its existence are here already" (371).

Reviewers were also struck by what they felt was Murasaki's "modernity." Mortimer spoke of "the sensibility of the characters" which was "uncannily like our own" but not at all like that of "our Victorian grandfathers." The review in the Times of 1925 hailed the "miracle" of Murasaki's creation of "the modern novel," which still managed to preserve "the fragrance of that fresh and sincere romance through which the very sensitive perceive the beauty and sorrow of the world" ("Japanese Masterpiece" 428). If "the manner of the story is strange, its matter is familiar," said Van Doren in 1925 (305). "So ancient, so very modern," wrote Robert Littel of the first volume in the New Republic: "We find, along with the antique freshness which is not of our time, which we could never recapture, a strangely modern soul" (324). The oxymoron "antique freshness" would appear to indicate that the modernist recovery of medieval and exotic 'oriental' cultures was agreeable, and it hints at a nostalgia for something perceived to be gone from the West--if it had ever existed.

Some critics were impressed with Murasaki not only because her 'modern novel' was written so long ago, but because she was a woman. The Times review of 1925, entitled "A Japanese Masterpiece," applauded the "entire emancipation of women" in Heian Japan "from the prejudices which have overwhelmed them in most other countries of the East and until recently in Europe" (428). Whether Japanese women were "emancipated" in the Heian period is a question open to serious debate. The reviewer appears to have forgotten that the Genji treats of a small aristocratic clique that represented a tiny fraction of Japanese society. Even within this small aristocratic world, the position of women was certainly precarious, as Helen McCullough maintains:

As is well known, custom prescribed a retired, uneventful mode of life for the Heian lady, who whiled away the daylight hours in innocuous amusements and cultivation of the polite accomplishments, and, if she was lucky, spent her nights with a husband. The tedious days were the price at which the nights were purchased, because there was no place in society for the woman who might disgrace her family and herself by nonconformist behavior. . . . her natural destiny was either marriage or some less formal liaison. ("Seidensticker" 99)

"A man can shape and mold [a woman] as he wishes," says Murasaki in a passage in Seidensticker cited by McCullough that was omitted by Waley (107).

Doris Bergen is even more emphatic on this point:

in Heian Japan . . . aristocratic women were socialized from a very young age to comply with the prevailing code of behavior and to remain silent even when they felt preyed upon. In a society that was both patriarchal and polygynous, various complex forms of marriage practices forced women, even more than men, to disguise their grievances, to suppress their angry impulses, and to repress the very thought of open rebellion. (3)

It hardly sounds as if Heian women were emancipated. Nevertheless, this image of Heian society became one of the primary attractions of the Tale of Genji for Virginia Woolf. Suzanne Henig maintains that Woolf's attitude towards the Far East changed from one of little sympathy to one of mild enthusiasm as a result of her reading Waley's Genji. "The transition occurs," says Henig, "as a result of the voice of a woman of sensitivity of the tenth century speaking to a woman of similar sensitivities in the twentieth which bridges the cultural and epochal lacunae" (422). So women are the same everywhere and always--such a notion seems improbable at best, and at worst imbued with a typically Western

humanist concept of universalism that is ultimately just another form of "appropriation (even colonization)."

Woolf reviewed Waley's first volume for Vogue in 1925.<sup>58</sup> She found it fascinating that "the accent of life" as depicted in Waley's Genji, "did not fall upon war; the interests of men did not centre upon politics."<sup>59</sup> She noted how, while Murasaki was "sitting down in her silk dress and trousers with pictures before her and the sound of poetry in her ears, with flowers in her garden and nightingales in the trees," her contemporaries in Western Europe were

Perpetually fighting, now men, now swine, now thickets and swamps,  
it was with fists swollen with toil, minds contracted by danger, eyes  
stung with smoke and feet that were cold among the rushes that our  
ancestors applied themselves to the pen, transcribed, translated and  
chronicled, or burst rudely and hoarsely into crude spasms of song.

Sumer is icumen in,

Lhude sing cuccu

Gone was any nineteenth century romantic image of the European middle ages, but under the influence of Waley's Genji Woolf seemed to have retained a romantic image of some Golden Age. Her image of Murasaki in 'trousers' dancing in the nights (see the epigraph at the beginning of this chapter) is obviously an image of the emancipated Western woman of the 1920s, since trousers is a rather inaccurate and 'masculine' translation of the hakama ('skirt')

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<sup>58</sup> There are several references to Waley in Woolf's diaries and letters. On 17 May 1925 she wrote to Desmond MacCarthy and referred to a dinner party that had taken place the night before at Edith Sitwell's: "the dinner party was great fun last night, but I find Waley a little demure and discreet" (vol. 3: 183). In volume 4 of the Letters there is a rather caustic reference to Waley's "white flannels" (412), and by October of 1930 she seems to have begun treating him as a figure of fun: "Waley--waly waly up the Bank and waly waly down the Brae" (vol. 4: 235).

<sup>59</sup> McCullough contrasts the "public, masculine world of political rivalry, bureaucratic routine, and state ceremony" with the "feminine sphere" of "religious activities, music, poetry, calligraphy, dress, and, above all, relations between the sexes" (98). Yet it has been the "feminine sphere" that has dominated Western perceptions of Heian civilization, from Waley to Morris.

that Murasaki wore, and there is no instance of Murasaki or any court lady in her position dancing in The Tale of Genji.

But to Woolf, Murasaki's was "a beautiful world; the quiet lady with all her breeding, her insight and her fun, is a perfect artist ..." (qtd. in Henig 427). Woolf's image of Murasaki was clearly a romantic image of herself, "with all her breeding," and perhaps she recognized in Waley's poetic prose style something of her own growing tendency towards a poetic, impressionistic style. We will take up the question of this style below. It is only necessary to point out here that Woolf's analysis of Waley's Genji had little to do with Japan or with the Genji, but revealed an intense dissatisfaction with contemporary Europe and the patriarchal history that had engendered it. Thus Genji, like Woolf herself (and Waley), never "relaxes his search for something different, something finer, something withheld" (qtd. in Henig 427).

Woolf was not the only reviewer to find in the high level of civilization and culture in the court life of Heian Japan a favourable comparison with the modern West. "It is always with something of a shock that we stumble upon evidence of the extent of our provincialism," said the reviewer of A Wreath of Cloud in the New Republic in 1927 (263). Lee Wilson Dodd of the Saturday Review found the contrast "somewhat disconcerting": "Lady Murasaki, I fear, could not have been too happy in the virile and childish West" (854). Here was a remarkable reversal of the orientalist conception of Japan as 'child' to the West, but the exotic image of Japan and the orient as feminine is perpetuated in the notion of a "virile" West and Murasaki's imagined discomfort.

The typically romantic response was Robert Herrick's, who claimed in 1928 to "know of no notable fiction in our western world that suggests even remotely this beautiful picture of an exotic, an exquisite civilization that has wholly passed away":

To our own realistic, "hard-boiled" age there must be something baffling in this cult of emotions. . . . We westerners have never evolved anything precisely like this cult of sensibility. . . . But today, abetted by a pseudo-scientific psychology and a craving for machine technique, we repudiate contemptuously such emotional "sentimentalism," and ruthlessly destroy the perfume of life by our coarse analyses . . . our realistic world has lost immeasurably in delicacy of perceptions, which give both interest and significance to human life. (215)

In fact, "we westerners" had evolved many "cults of sensibility," such as the Augustan age in England, the French court at Versailles, and almost again in Britain in the 1920s under the leadership of the dandy Prince of Wales (later Edward VIII, who abdicated for the love of a 'common' woman; see Green's Children of the Sun, 48).

But Herrick's romanticization of the East, a yearning for the Golden Age (which has always already gone), tied in with a general critique of contemporary Western civilization, was a typically modern response, and we can also observe it in W. B. Yeats. Yeats's interest in Japanese culture is well known. He wrote to Shotaro Oshima in 1927 to say that he had been reading Waley's translation of "the great classic of the world," but had, unfortunately for his critics, "too much to say about it to say anything" (qtd. in Oshima 7). I would venture to say that the Genji tended to confirm Yeats's image of Japan as an Eastern artistic utopia, and he certainly celebrated the virtues of ancient cultures as opposed to what he felt was the malaise of modern Europe. Heian Japan was another instance for Yeats of an ideal civilization where poetry and aristocracy were united. One wonders, however, if Yeats actually finished reading the Genji, since in his declining years his eyesight was growing weaker, and by the '30s he was having Balzac read to him. Ireland and Europe were always his passionate, ultimate concerns:

"Whenever I have been tempted to go to Japan, China, or India for my philosophy," he wrote in 1934, "Balzac has brought me back, reminded me of my preoccupation with national, social, personal problems, convinced me that I cannot escape from our Comedie humaine" (Essays 448).

Readers were moved by Murasaki's 'masterpiece,' but some appeared even more moved by Waley's English prose, and though they could not read Waley's source text, they suspected that such beauty might not exist in the original, which is often "perceived as being on a lower cultural level," and whose status has only been "upgraded" by the translator. This is a traditionally orientalist response to a translation from a non-European language, according to Susan Bassnett-McGuire (71). Thus, "[the Genji] is so brilliant," wrote Katherine Angell "that one is tempted to wonder how much of the style we owe to Murasaki, how much to her translator" (100). Robert Littel wondered if Waley "has not helped to bridge the gap between the near-great and the great by one of the most charming translations ever made from any language into English" (1925: 324). In 1926 he stated that "a very large part of the spell . . . laid upon us was due to Mr. Waley's translation" (372).

John Carter suggested in 1925 that "the original text has been so abridged and presumably also expurgated that one hardly knows the extent to which the original has been edited" (1). In a later review entitled "Perfumed Pages," he called Waley's work a "transubstantiation," and argued that "more than a translation is involved in the rendering of a medieval Japanese manuscript into our tongue" (661). So the "perfume" is not Murasaki's but Waley's, and the profane pages only smell 'perfumed' after the translator-priest has performed his holy ritual of transubstantiation. The reviewer in the Times of The Bridge of Dreams declared an admiration divided "pretty evenly between the Lady

Murasaki and her translator" (326), but the Times reviewer of The Lady of the Boat had asked

how much of its elegance of sentiment and pure verbal felicity is the Lady Murasaki's and how much the translator's. It is not that one suspects Mr. Waley of having put into the story something that was not there before, but it is easy to imagine a translation which was accurate enough in its fashion and yet missed the grace, the irony and the undertones of modernity which he so signally achieves. (443)

It was not just the reviewers who knew no Japanese, though, who denied the possibility of elegance and grace to the original text. William Empson,<sup>60</sup> who lived and taught in Japan for three years (1931-34), wrote in 1964:

Long ago, when the first volumes of Waley's translation of The Tale of Genji were coming out, another English expert on Japanese told me that Waley was treating Lady Murasaki chivalrously: that is, he was allowing her to say what she probably would have wished to say, if she had had at her command the full resources of the English language. I thought this was so grand that it almost ceased to be catty. Now Waley says it himself, but with the reservation that there were also great resources unknown to modern English at the command of Lady Murasaki. (410)

Empson and Waley recognized that the translation process had been dialogic; if Waley had appropriated the language and voice of the 'other,' she in turn had made him a medium, and out of her 'great resources' provided him with a voice.

The renowned Japanese scholar George Sansom, who was almost certainly Empson's "English expert," though he called Waley's translation "masterly" and

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<sup>60</sup> See Rintarô Fukuhara, "Mr. William Empson in Japan." William Empson: the Man and his Work. Ed. Roma Gill. London: Routledge, 1974: 21-33.

itself almost "a work of creative genius," wondered if Waley "does more than justice to the original--not because of any short-comings in Murasaki, but because modern English is incomparably richer, stronger, more various and supple than Heian Japanese?" (Cultural History 235-6). Sansom's condescending conviction that modern English is just a better language than Heian Japanese might have been partly due to his embarrassment at not having recognized for himself the greatness of the Genji, and evident in his remarks is the nineteenth-century orientalist notion that a translation from any non-Western language into a European language is an improvement upon the source text. His view seems to be that no language could possibly be as rich and strong as modern English, his language.

These criticisms did not lessen the popularity of Waley's Genji, nor did they detract from the general view that Waley had created an important work of English literature in its own right. His Tale of Genji, as Mortimer said, "ranks with the most beautiful English prose of our time" (qtd. in Morris, "AW" 51). "In the late 1920s," C. P. Snow recalled in 1977, "most literary young people whom I knew were under the spell of The Tale of Genji. The six volumes . . . were an intense aesthetic experience, even to some whose tastes were usually more rugged" (28). The Tale of Genji was "the essence of all tragedy," said Aldous Huxley, "refined to a couple of tablespoonfuls of amber-coloured tea in a porcelain cup no bigger than a magnolia flower" (156). Even in Japan, Peter Quennell's students of English literature confessed to him that they "much preferred Mr. Waley's version of The Tale of Genji to Lady Murasaki's obscure and archaic text" ("A Note" 92). Unwin confirmed in 1960 that Waley's translation "has had a steady sale in Japan where it is read by many in preference to versions in modern Japanese" (193). And Chamberlain, in a revised edition of his Things Japanese, grudgingly admitted that thanks to Waley's "beautiful



English version . . . the cultivated European reader [could] form his own opinion [of the Genji]-so far, that is, as any literary opinion can be founded on a translation." As for himself, Chamberlain had "come to doubt whether [he had] thoroughly understood the exceptionally difficult text" (1939: 295).

Clearly Waley had created a work of literature that has an entirely different significance in an English or Western context than the original in Japanese. As John Carter concluded in 1933,

it is as a contribution to English literature that Mr. Waley's transubstantiation . . . must be considered. The Tale of Genji takes rank as one of the notable books of our era. . . . [I]t fits very precisely into the 'literature of escape.' . . . We find ourselves in a Never-Never Land which enables us to forget Fascism, the monthly bills, and controlled inflation. (661)

In this sense Waley's Tale of Genji is a kind of travel literature, a fashionable genre of the 1920s and '30s,<sup>61</sup> as a journey, it was recognized, was not necessarily only "the act of going from one place to another" (OED). Graham Greene's Journey Without Maps (1936) was a journey into the interior of the mind, and into what were perceived as the past origins of humanity. Waley's friend Osbert Sitwell's Escape With Me (1939) was a deliberate attempt to escape to the exotic 'orient' from the seriousness of contemporary European reality or history. W. H. Auden and Christopher Isherwood sought the very opposite, the heart of darkness in China in their Journey to a War (1939). Waley's Genji was also an

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<sup>61</sup> Paul Fussell in Abroad (1980) has written of "the great flight of writers from England in the 20's and 30's" which he calls "flights from a real or fancied narrowing of horizons [in England]." He goes so far as to call the "British Literary Diaspora . . . one of the signals of literary modernism," since virtually no modern writer--except Proust--remained "where he's 'supposed' to be" (11). Another notable exception is Virginia Woolf, who I believe remained where 'she' was supposed to be. Waley from 1930 travelled annually to the Alps for skiing "for about the first three months of each year." He often spent Aprils in Italy or Germany, and then on to Paris. "This was the pattern of his life in the nineteen thirties and again for some time after the war" (M. Waley 20).

escape, a vicarious journey to an exotic orient that was everything contemporary England was not, and it offered the experience of that journey for a fraction of the cost. As Terry Eagleton has commented, "'experience' is the homeland of ideology, . . . it is also in its literary form a kind of vicarious self-fulfillment. If you do not have the money and leisure to visit the Far East, except perhaps as a soldier in the pay of British imperialism, then you can always 'experience' it at second hand by reading Conrad or Kipling" (26). Or Waley.

Waley's was the standard, really the only English version of the Genji until 1976. In that year Edward Seidensticker published his version. His reason for undertaking the arduous ten-year task was that Waley's version, he maintained, was neither accurate nor complete. What was wanted in an age more sophisticated and informed where Japanese studies was concerned was "a translation with a little less of the translator in it" ("A Decade" 131). Reviews of 'The Seidensticker Genji,' as it has come to be known, invariably compare the new version with Waley's translation and specialists compare both with the extant text and with versions in modern Japanese and other European languages. Among Waley's strongest detractors is Marian Ury, who calls "Waley's book" "an intriguing hybrid," and argues that "we have not really had a Genji in English until [Seidensticker]" ("Complete" 201). Other critics recognize that Seidensticker's is also a representation or interpretation in English of a work originally written in a remote and utterly dissimilar language. Thus Masao Miyoshi points out that Seidensticker's prose, "which is uniquely *his*, obviously [reflects] *his* interpretation of the work." Seidensticker, therefore, "does not superannuate Waley's masterpiece" (299). Helen McCullough agrees that "it would be unthinkable to repudiate our great and enduring debt to Waley" ("Seidensticker" 93). Edwin Cranston acknowledges the importance of Seidensticker's completeness as opposed to Waley's "excisions and artistic

embroidery," but maintains that "where the two translations differ in interpretation it would be unwise to assume that Waley is necessarily in error. . . . It is fortunate indeed," he diplomatically concludes, "that we have two translations now instead of one" (25).

One of the differences between Waley and Seidensticker is that Waley was reviewed and appreciated by literati who knew no Japanese and who read the Genji as an English novel of their time, whereas Seidensticker, as the paragraph above suggests, was reviewed mainly by Japan specialists in an educational setting and is now read mainly by professional readers--teachers and students. An exception was the English novelist and critic V. S. Pritchett, who noted in his review of Seidensticker that "the generation that followed [Waley] are far from any *belle époque* and are dedicated technicians strictly bound to their texts" (3). Japan is now important to the West in a way that it was not when Waley translated; the post-war growth of Japanese Studies, particularly in the United States, attests to this. The charm and grace of Waley's late-Edwardian English have also been exchanged for the terseness and directness of Seidensticker's American. Waley and Seidensticker were both dictated by the dominant poetics of the day, and since a poetics is not a timeless given but a historical variable, neither text is definitive, both are transient. As long as there is an interest in the Genji Monogatari, and a market for it, there is always room for yet another version. Indeed, Helen McCullough has already translated ten chapters in her Genji & Heike (1994). It is undoubtedly only a matter of time until another complete translation appears in English.

But for now, the Seidensticker Genji is the version generally used in Japanese literature courses taught in English. I cannot help recalling, however, some friends in Japanese studies who complained to me in 1991 that the Tale of Genji they were made to read was dreadfully long and boring (no problem, the

market responded with an abridged version.) Meanwhile, as a student of English literature I had been reading with considerable pleasure Waley's translation and was rather surprised by their response. It seems they were having less an "intense aesthetic experience," than an experience intensely academic. What a shame, for without any pleasure of the text, what is left of reading?

Masao Miyoshi, in his review of Seidensticker's translation of The Tale of Genji, expressed some dissatisfaction with Seidensticker's terse sentences, his punctuation, his "clarity of ironic vision," which all "turn the tale into a modern Western novel (or romance), unavoidably changing the nature of the Heian sensibility." As a monogatari, Miyoshi points out, The Tale of Genji "is essentially a verbal flow scarcely marked by punctuation or paragraphing. . . . Words follow upon words, as endlessly varied in tones and shades as undulating *gagaku* music." Miyoshi seems to be describing here the narrative technique of stream-of-consciousness, and in fact he suggests that Virginia Woolf--who once said "the sentence is not fit for a woman; it was invented by a man"--would have been an ideal translator of the Genji. "It so happens," says Miyoshi, "that Woolf's language . . . has features uncannily like those of Lady Murasaki's" (300-1).

Miyoshi's notion was not just wishful thinking, for as Sonja Arntzen has recently commented, "when I was reading Woolf, I had an eerie sense that she was writing English in a style that had some affinity with the prose style shaped by classical Japanese women authors" (Kagerô Diary ix). In her translation of the Kagerô Nikki (Gossamer Diary), Arntzen responds to Woolf's challenge to create an écriture féminine that circumvents 'masculine' grammar and sentence structure. Richard Bowring also translated a small passage from "The Oak Tree" chapter of the Genji (ch. 36) in which "the concept of 'sentence' [was] under

implicit attack" (61-2). Interestingly enough, the reviewer in the Times of Waley's second volume, The Sacred Tree (1926), remarked that

Murasaki's style carries with it a suggestion--to which, it seems, Mr. Waley himself is sensitive--of that of Mrs. Virginia Woolf. Murasaki's dramatic effects and contrasts are built up by a kind of dramatic 'texture' of language, by word-sequences which, in the two writers, seem to originate in rather similar processes of thought. (206)

It is fascinating to consider the possibility that Waley may have had Virginia Woolf in mind as a model for his lyrical style, but a closer examination of Woolf and Waley, not to mention the timing of Woolf's texts that mark her great stylistic changes (Jacob's Room [1922], To the Lighthouse [1925], Mrs. Dalloway [1927], The Waves [1931]), indicates that Waley's prose style--which is surprisingly consistent throughout the Genji--was probably already developed by the time Woolf began her transformation (remember that Waley began to translate the Genji as early as 1921).<sup>62</sup>

Another question is whether The Tale of Genji in Waley's translation had any influence on Woolf's development as a writer; whether indeed, there are "similar thought processes" in two female writers separated by continents and centuries. Catherine Nelson-McDermott (1992) has recently made some interesting correlations between Murasaki Shikibu and Woolf, and suggested that Woolf may have drawn on the character Genji as a model for Orlando. Woolf's acknowledgment of Waley's "knowledge of Chinese" in the preface to Orlando (1928) is amusing but suggestive: the character Orlando, who changes sex in the middle of the novel, is the androgynous hero[ine]. (Waley was but one

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<sup>62</sup> In a personal communication (23 Nov. 1999) Edward Bishop suggested the possibility that Waley may have seen, and been influenced by, some of Woolf's earlier sketches such as "The Mark on the Wall" (1917) or "Kew Gardens" (1919), collected in Monday or Tuesday (1921), in which a lyrical, experimental style was already in place. Waley's style was never experimental nor quite so intensely personal as Woolf's, but this is an intriguing suggestion that I will be looking into.

of Woolf's many friends of ambiguous sexuality thanked in that preface.) As writers, Murasaki and Woolf also seem to have been especially concerned with the senses or physical sensations, with smells and sounds and sights and their effects on the mind; of course, the same could be said of Joyce or Proust. Nevertheless Murasaki, as Nelson-McDermott recognizes, comes to hold an important place in Woolf's history of women's writing as depicted in A Room of One's Own (1929; originally entitled "Women and Fiction"). What is missing in Nelson-McDermott's analysis is any recognition or suggestion that the "language of physical sensation" in the Genji that so impressed Woolf was to some extent *Waley's* language; that the voice which was heard and so enraptured the generation between the wars was at least in part Waley's elegant voice. Woolf herself referred in her review to "Mr. Waley's beautiful telescope" (qtd. in Henig 427) and spoke in her Letters of "Waley's Japanese novel" (3: 190). Yet critics like Nelson-McDermott write of the Tale of Genji as though Waley *were* Murasaki, failing to register that Waley's Genji is a work of English literature with a style of its own.

Certainly Woolf and Waley had similar aims. They both wrote what Cyril Connolly called "romantic prose," and the romantic prose style develops from a writer who is, or was, or aspires to be a poet (Enemies 49). This romantic prose style Connolly defined as "Mandarin," though such disparate writers as Woolf, Lytton Strachey, the Sitwells, Huxley, and Waley were "new" or "reformed" Mandarins, writers who consciously set out to assault and supplant contemporary realists like Gissing, Bennett, Wells, and Shaw, and at the same time to rid their own writing of any traces of Pateresque languor (Enemies 45-57).<sup>63</sup> It is perhaps no coincidence that all of the new Mandarins mentioned here

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<sup>63</sup> Lytton Strachey described Pater's prose style as "death itself," and Leonard Woolf agreed that "Bloomsbury felt Pater's style ridiculous in its self-conscious preciosity" (qtd. in Reed 199).

praised Waley's Genji for its beautiful prose style.<sup>64</sup> Woolf's attack on realism (and on Edwardian 'manliness') appeared in her article, "Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown" (1923), and then subsequently in her own impressionistic novels. Likewise it was Strachey's conviction, according to Barry Spurr, "that consciously artistic literature, through its beautiful transfiguration of reality, was profoundly therapeutic" (33). Art, in other words, as partly a therapeutic outlet for a suppressed homosexual sensibility, both challenges and transcends unpleasant moral realities. Similarly, Waley wrote an introduction to Ronald Firbank's Works (1929) that was frankly eulogistic, an impassioned defense of Firbank's impressionistic Camp style (Waley used the term "silly") against "the load of realistic lumber under which the modern story is interred" (2). Echoing Woolf, Waley lamented that "disaster befell the English novel early in the twentieth century," and Firbank and the new Mandarins were there to rescue it (Firbank 2-3). Waley had already found in Murasaki Shikibu the assistance he needed, a writer whose style was imbued with poetry, and whose construction, he maintained, was not realistic: "[The] sense of reality with which she invests her narrative is not the result of realism in any ordinary sense. It is not the outcome of those clever pieces of small observation by which the modern novelist strives to attain the same effect. . . . Her construction is in fact classical; elegance, symmetry, restraint . . ." (ST 33). These words describe Waley's own style and preferences perfectly. Adrian Pinnington suggests that Waley's "Bloomsbury aesthetics" derive from the art criticism of Roger Fry and Clive Bell, particularly in the preference for neoclassical formalism over Gothic irregularity ("Bloomsbury Aesthetics" 56-61). I might add that the eighteenth century age of

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<sup>64</sup> Appraisals of Waley's Genji by Woolf and Huxley we have seen. Waley was close friends with the Sitwells (Osbert, Edith and Sacheverell), all three of whom dedicated books to him. Lytton Strachey described Waley's Genji as "very beautiful in bits - Country wine, made by a lady of quality - Cowslip brandy" (qtd. in Holroyd 2: 515).

Voltaire was an ideal one for Strachey and Leonard Woolf. Perhaps the Heian period in Japan also recalled for Waley the aristocratic "rule of taste" that predominated in the Augustan age in Britain (see Steegman, The Rule of Taste).

New Mandarinism was an alternative ideology, a political force not unlike the Aesthetic Movement that believed passionately in Art and Literature as the last sanctuary of Beauty--what Waley called "pleasure"--in an ugly, materialistic post-war world now being taken over by cheap realistic novels and shoddy journalism (Firbank 1). "If fiction is to become an art instead of a commodity it cannot continue to be distributed through the same channels as the ordinary commercial novel," Waley charged, arguing that publishers had a duty to Art to buy up manuscripts of unpopular fine writing whether the public desired them or not (Firbank 9). This was all very well for the boy from Rugby-Cambridge-Bloomsbury with a contract in hand for six volumes of the Genji (which was a great commercial success) and no pressing need to write for a living anyway; Firbank also had had a private income, by the way, and had himself paid the publication costs of his unsuccessful novels. Waley always claimed to be writing for the average reader rather than the specialist,<sup>65</sup> but his Tale of Genji is high Mandarin in at least one other important respect than its style: the genial patronage of Art and Nature that is so much a part of the Genji presupposes a reader to whom these things are of superior interest and value: a sensitive, educated reader, like the translator himself. The sheer length of Waley's translation, over 600,000 words in six volumes, also presumes that this reader of leisure has a great deal of that most precious of commodities: time.

Let us examine Waley's style. For the purpose of this discussion, I will compare Waley with Seidensticker (and refer briefly to Sieffert), not in order to

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<sup>65</sup> Francis Johns said that "the secret of Waley's originality" lay in his ability "to couple literature with learning. . . . he consistently mentioned the needs and interests of the non-specialist reader" ("Manifestations" 182).



question the accuracy of Waley but to highlight the features of an English style that is uniquely his and to which his generation responded. As Edward Said has written, "the things to look at are style, figures of speech, setting, narrative devices, historical and cultural circumstances, *not* the correctness of the representation nor its fidelity to some great original" (*Orientalism* 21). What is distinctive or appealing about Waley that even Seidensticker (*Genji* xvii) could write of the "sacrilege" of preparing a new translation?

Waley wrote very long paragraphs made up of a careful balance of simple, compound and complex sentences. One paragraph in *A Wreath of Cloud* carries on for six pages and consists of one hundred and seventy-five lines, about two thousand words (*WC* 60-5; *ML* 378-81). His prose is rich in alliteration and assonance which provide a delicate rhythm and cadence that strive towards Miyoshi's desired "verbal flow" as the lengthy paragraphs glide forward. This melodious flow is always prudently restrained, however, by a spare use of adverbs and adjectives, and by what Waley felt were the necessary checks of commas and periods. The language is never ornate or inflated, and the overall structure is well within the bounds of traditional English grammar. Like Strachey, Waley was "meticulously grammatical," though his minimization of paragraphing would seem to undermine this basic 'masculine' unit of composition (Spurr 33). Here and there are also longer sentences of relative clauses in series that almost run-on, almost transcending that grammatical limit: "The windows of those coaches were hung with an exquisitely contrived display of coloured scarves and cloaks, and among the courtiers who were to go down to Ise there were many who thought with an especial pang of one who in his honour had added some gay touch of her own to the magnificence of this unprecedented show" (*ST* 48; *ML* 197). But the syntax is usually straightforward, the thought uncomplicated, and the diction common (except for the odd

unfamiliar Buddhist term whose meaning can be guessed from the context); which is just to say that Waley's style is relatively easy and accessible, at least in relation to other modernist writers like Joyce or Woolf.

To give a clearer sense of Waley's style it is necessary to quote here at some length, as I do from The Sacred Tree:

He was in very ill humour and the time hung heavily on his hands. It was now autumn and it seemed a pity not to be in the country. He decided to spend a little while at the Temple in the Cloudy Woods. Here in the cell of his mother's elder brother, a master of the Vinaya, he spent several days reading the sacred texts and practicing various austerities. During this time much happened both to move and delight him. The maple leaves in the surrounding forests were just turning and he remembered Sojo's song written in the same place: 'Proud autumn fields. . . .' In a little while he had almost forgotten that this quiet place was not his home. He gathered about him a number of doctors famous for their understanding of the Holy Law and made them dispute in his presence. Yet even in the midst of scenes such as these, calculated to impress him in the highest degree with the futility of all earthly desires, one figure from the fleeting world of men still rose up importunately before him and haunted every prayer. One day at dawn by the light of the sinking moon the priests of the temple were making the morning offering of fresh leaves and flowers before an image that stood near by. He could hear the clink of the silver flower-trays as they scattered chrysanthemum and maple leaves of many hues around the Buddha's feet. It seemed to him then that the life these people led was worth while, not merely as a means to salvation but for its own pleasantness and beauty. (ST 66-7; ML 208).

It is, above all, the assonance and alliteration which give this passage its lyrical beauty. The atmosphere is also richly aesthetic, almost luscious with the alluring imagery of "dawn by the light of the sinking moon" and "maple leaves of many hues." The exoticism is entrancing, and Waley's readers have been entranced.

There are still twenty-six more lines in this paragraph which contains twenty-seven sentences with an average of 22.37 words per sentence; the shortest sentence contains six words and the longest, fifty-one. The same passage in Seidensticker is rendered into *six* paragraphs of twenty-eight sentences, with an average of 16.32 words per sentence; his shortest sentence is two words and the longest, forty-six (Seidensticker 199-200).<sup>66</sup> This pattern is consistent throughout both translations.

In Waley, the poems are collapsed into the prose, giving the prose itself its lyrical, poetic quality, while in Seidensticker waka (poems) are set apart as couplets, leaving the prose somewhat plainer but drawing more attention to the significant beauty of the poems, some of the sources of which Seidensticker helpfully identifies in notes. Waley's notes are fewer, and he rarely identifies the source of a poem; he seems to have been determined to present the Genji as an English novel and to minimize signs of scholarly intervention. Even dialogue in Waley is contained within paragraphs and not set apart as convention decrees. The overall effect is to sustain the reader's uninterrupted attention: paragraph breaks impose a moment of pause, disrupting for an instant the thought and the flow.

Waley introduces material into his text, however, that cannot be found in Seidensticker. The first sentence of the paragraph cited above is not out of place with its reference to the slow passing of time, but it has no equivalent in

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<sup>66</sup> This particular passage was not translated by Helen McCullough, whose style is closer to Seidensticker's, with relatively short sentences and paragraphs. McCullough translates waka, however, into English poems of five lines.

Seidensticker who merely states, "He kept himself at Nijô." Interestingly, the French translator of the Genji Monogatari, René Sieffert, also includes a phrase that is closer to Waley: "il se retint et laissa passer le temps" (225). But Waley's sentence reminds the reader of the first line of Somerset Maugham's Of Human Bondage (1915): "The day broke grey and dull. The clouds hung heavily, and there was a rawness in the air that suggested snow" (3). Waley would never have used the word "rawness," but the verb phrase "hung heavily" evokes a similar late autumn atmosphere of loneliness at the beginning of Maugham's novel. It is doubtful that Waley was consciously alluding to Maugham--the phrase "hung heavily" occurs no fewer than seven times in Waley--but we can say he was writing in an idiom that was current at least a generation earlier, in 1915, and I believe any attentive contemporary reader would have heard this echo.

The first two sentences in Waley's passage cited above are compound, joined with the conjunction 'and.' Such plain syntax echoes the Authorized Version of the Bible; though Neil McEwan notes that compound sentences in series are a characteristic feature of stories that have been told in English for over a thousand years (36). Waley must have been making a conscious effort to keep his language plain and readable, in the manner of traditional English storytelling. E. M. Forster, however, suggested in 1944 that the English of the Bible, "the great monument of our seventeenth-century speech," which had "constantly influenced our talk and writing for the last three hundred years," had suddenly by 1920 "become remote from popular English" (278). Again, it appears as though Waley was deliberately constructing a style that consciously evoked a pre-war atmosphere, "remote," but only recently passed away and still within living memory.

Waley also cites part of a poem by "Sojo" (Sôjô Henjô, 816-890) which has no equivalent in Seidensticker or Sieffert. The poet Henjô (born Yoshimine

Munesada), the name by which he is usually known, is one of the six poetic sages of Japanese poetry (rokkasen) as mentioned by Ki no Tsurayuki in his preface to the Kokinshû. Waley's partially translated line, "proud autumn fields," is an allusion to poem 1016 in the Kokinshû by Henjô, according to the 17th century Kogetsushô commentaries on the Genji on which Waley's translation is supposed to have been based. That 'Sojo' appears in Waley's text is strong evidence that Waley did, in fact, use the Kogetsushô commentaries, in spite of opinions to the contrary.<sup>67</sup>

Waley's Genji hears "the clink of the silver flower-trays as [the priests] scattered chrysanthemum and maple leaves of many hues," while in Seidensticker there is only "a clattering as the priests put new flowers before the images" (199). Waley appears to have been aestheticizing the Buddhist rituals, and this suspicion is confirmed in the final sentence cited above, where Genji is attracted to a monastic life not for its "various austerities" ("fasting and meditation" in Seidensticker) but for its "pleasantness and beauty." In Seidensticker Genji only asks himself, "why did he not embrace the religious life?" This aestheticization of Heian culture is an aspect of Waley that we will take up below.

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<sup>67</sup> Yukio Yashiro reported that there were some Japanese scholars who suspected Waley--a 'foreigner'-- had probably not used traditional commentaries but had relied, rather, on a modern paraphrase, such as that of Akiko Yosano, since classical Japanese is an extremely difficult language, even for Japanese native speakers. Yashiro, who lived close to Waley in London, said that he often saw Waley carrying around the Kogetsushô (18). The line in the Genji which may be an allusion (hiki-uta) to Henjô is "*aki no no no ito nana meki taru*" ("The fields, splashed with autumn colours"--Seidensticker, trans.) Henjô's poem reads as follows, with a translation by Laurel Rodd (350):

<i>Aki no no ni</i>	flirtatiously they
<i>namamekitateru</i>	sway in the fields of autumn
<i>ominaeshi</i>	fair maiden flowers
<i>ana kashigamashi</i>	competing loudly for my gaze--
<i>hana mo hitotoki</i>	your blossoms too are short-lived

I am grateful to Joshua Mostow for locating this reference in the Kogetsushô.

What in Seidensticker is the "Ujii Temple" (199), or the "monastère de l'Urin-in" in Sieffert (225), a specific historical place in the north of Kyoto (lit. 'cloud-forest temple'), becomes in Waley the "Temple in the Cloudy Woods," a setting that carries in English a distinct tone and image of Asian exoticism more aesthetically pleasing than the cold grey image of a European monastery. For English readers the other-worldly effect--the non-specific historical setting--was certainly pleasing, as we have seen in the reviews. This analysis could obviously continue almost indefinitely. My point here has been to suggest that Waley attempted to approach the "verbal flow" of Murasaki Shikibu's style by minimizing paragraph changes and containing poems and dialogue within those paragraphs; he could not, however, let go of English grammar altogether, as much as he admired the styles of Joyce and Woolf. There was no "Shock of the New" in Waley, but an equally consciously artistic prose style dictated by the twin principles of poetic impulse and classical restraint.

A question that arises is whether homosexuality had any effect on Waley's style. In commenting on Ronald Firbank, Connolly was inclined to believe that homosexuality "is not a factor of importance in the assessment of a writer's style," though he had also boasted that it should be "possible to learn as much about an author's income and sex-life from one paragraph of his writing as from his cheque stubs and his love-letters" (*Enemies* 34, 8). Some critics today would agree with the latter of these observations. Spurr, for instance, argues that Lytton Strachey's "psycho-sexual disposition predetermined [his] susceptibility to the amelioration of the hostile forms of reality . . ." (34). Recent studies of, among others, Henry James, E. M. Forster, Firbank and Proust have argued that homosexuality is a contributing factor to the highly unique styles of these

writers.<sup>68</sup> It is not merely a question of locating overt homoeroticism in the language of gay writers, for homosexuality, before the present period of queer theory, was often suppressed, displaced, revealed only in forms and codes and styles. As Robert Martin states in an essay on Barthes, "homosexuality *is* a style, not a subject matter" (282; emphasis added). How does The Tale of Genji fit into this? I will suggest here that Waley's Genji is particularly notable for its presentation of an alternative model of masculinity, and for a style that draws attention to itself as aesthetic.

The significance of Waley's championing of Firbank cannot be overestimated. It was through Firbank, says Martin Green, that the dandy-aesthete style of Wilde and the 1890s was transmitted to the bohemians of the 1920s. Firbank was "a Max Beerbohm *de son jour*, according to Hugh David (79). Owning a copy of Firbank at Oxford in the '20s was "the test of whether a man was really an aesthete," according to Alan Pryce-Jones (Green 77-8). Subscribing to Firbank was also a challenge to Victorian-Edwardian literary constructions of masculinity. After the war, as Green explains, the 'manly' heroes of pre-war novelists were not merely out of fashion; they were immediately associated with the evil 'fathers' who had led millions of England's fine youths ('sons') to their deaths for a variety of abstract--and false--ideals:

Young men no longer wanted to grow up to be men--that is, they did not want to be fathers-husbands-masters. For what the Great War had meant to England . . . was *public* disillusionment with the ideals of maturity cherished there before. . . . W. H. Auden remarks, in *A Certain World*, on the enormous change brought by the war in the cultural value of "soldier" and "fighting." He says that from then on

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<sup>68</sup> See David Bergman, ed. Camp Grounds: Style and Homosexuality. Amherst: U of Massachusetts P, 1993; or Robert K. Martin and George Piggford. Eds. Queer Forster. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1997.

even the *Iliad* became uncomfortable reading for the men of Western culture, who henceforth found the Chinese poets more congenial on such subjects, because they were pacific and hedonist. (42-4)

Murasaki must be included here along with "the Chinese poets" introduced to the West by Waley, for more than any other notable work of the period "the accent of life" as depicted in Waley's translation of the Genji, "did not fall upon war; the interests of men did not centre upon politics," in Woolf's words. Green later points out that the typical authors of the older generation were "Rudyard Kipling, H. G. Wells, Arnold Bennett, John Galsworthy, Robert Bridges, Joseph Conrad, John Masefield, John Buchan, names out of which an image of Edwardian manhood arises naturally enough" (61). We begin to see the significance of the new Mandarin attack on the realists. A post-war male hero like Hikaru Genji was of a completely different cast.

The post-war period was one of great adjustment in English ideas of masculinity, as Green suggests, though Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar later demonstrated in their landmark No Man's Land (1988-94) that there were other earlier causes of the modern crisis of masculinity, notably the rise of the feminist movement. The subject is much too large to treat adequately here, though we might mention in passing some alternative post-war masculine 'types.' T. E. Lawrence has been constructed as a great English 'masculine' war hero, an epitome of empire celebrated and manipulated by Churchill and Curzon. Yet the oriental image of him in Arab headdress (that he wore even on the streets of Paris), and his "unmistakable approval and acceptance of the idea of homoerotic sex" in his Seven Pillars of Wisdom (Asher 298), would seem to undermine the image of the manly Edwardian Gentleman, or at least add to it another dimension--the English hero as Other.



Ford Madox Ford's The Good Soldier (1915) offers two possible 'heroes,' the protagonist Edward Ashburnham and the narrator Dowell, both of whom might be seen as perversions of a 'normal' masculinity: the former is "the model of humanity, the hero, the athlete, the father of his county, the law-giver" (78). He is a typically Edwardian 'good soldier,' but effectively destroyed by the force of Ford's irony. Dowell may be seen as Edward's antithesis: impotent, womanly, and cuckolded; his reliability as a narrator is as uncertain as his sexuality. Both characters expose problems of repressed sexuality in Edwardian society, and the novel as a whole suggests that a new morality and a new masculine model are desperately required.

Richard Aldington's George Winterbourne, from Death of a Hero (1929), seems the typical Edwardian 'hero,' volunteering for the trenches and dying there uselessly. Yet his pre-war life is a self-conscious experiment in artistic and sexual freedom, and the novel is, among other things, a scathing indictment of the masculine heartiness of the English public school system, with its "regimentation and sports fetishism," its deep suspicion of the arts as something unexplainably unmanly and obscene (Doyle 131). Aldington lashes out at the sexual hypocrisies of Victorian-Edwardian society, in which men and women are born, live and die without any idea how to make love. Even humble and likeable Leopold Bloom, described by another character in the novel as a 'womanly man' and the antithesis of aristocratic refinement, challenges the beef-eating, swearing and cyclopic masculinity of King and Country and Church. He opts for another way, a middle way that embraces the feminine element within a balanced heterosexual male identity.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> I do not agree with Gilbert and Gubar's argument that Leopold Bloom is a "no-man" (Vol. 1: 35-6, 89). Certainly his masculinity is under attack in Ulysses, but Bloom successfully challenges other 'masculine' types like the Citizen, or even the hyper-masculine Blazes Boylan. That Bloom allows Molly to commit adultery suggests his understanding and acceptance of her sexual needs and his rejection of a Judeo-Christian law against adultery. Molly makes it clear in her monologue,

Genji might appear to be utterly unlike these post-war masculine 'heroes'; he is appropriately and confidently masculine in a polygamous society in which 'homosexual' relationships were also 'normal.' But in English culture he too challenges the Victorian-Edwardian masculine ideal, explores the moral consequences of multiple sexual partners (as do some of the female characters), eagerly embraces nature and the arts, and offers at least the suggestion that civilization would not go to pieces were there no Judeo-Christian monogamous ideal of marriage. Waley had found in Murasaki an ideal ever-youthful male hero, far removed from the despised manly type, and yet equally self-assured in his masculine identity. He is neither maimed or unmanned (like Hemingway's Jake in The Sun Also Rises, or the Fisher King in Eliot's The Waste Land), and is also confidently effeminate. Attractive and attracted to both sexes, Genji is both a homosexual and heterosexual Western ideal or fantasy in an age when such literary men were sorely wanting, as Gilbert and Gubar's study makes clear.

The Tale of Genji is not usually thought of as a homoerotic novel. Indeed, the hero Genji who, we have seen, has been compared to Don Juan, is a 'lady killer,' literally as well as figuratively.<sup>70</sup> But there are several ways in which the Genji has considerable homoerotic appeal, particularly for English readers of Waley's time. First, the character Genji himself. As a child he is said to be "so lovely a boy" that it is a great regret to all that he should have to adorn a man's dress; however, his "delicate features" make him "handsomer than ever" in trousers (TG 34-5; ML 18).

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moreover, that Bloom's love and tenderness is preferable to Boylan's rough masculinity. See also Joseph Ronsley, "Leopold Bloom: The Manly Man." Conflicting Identities: Essays on Modern Irish Literature. Ed. Robbie B. H. Goh. Singapore: Unipress, 1997: 99-119.

<sup>70</sup> It might be argued that he is indirectly the cause of the deaths of Rokujō, Aoi, Yūgao, and Fujitsubo. Doris Bergen says as much in her book A Woman's Weapon: Spirit Possession in The Tale of Genji (1997): "Courtship is here analogous to the hunt, or an extension of it, with the women as the symbolic prey and the hedge as the enclosing wilderness" (2). Spirit possession becomes a means of resisting or subverting male aggression, according to Bergen.

As he grows into a young man he is more beautiful than ever, and he begins to take an interest in women. Yet in the second chapter we see him observing with interest young boys as well: "there were in the room several charming boys, sons of Ki no Kami, some of whom Genji already knew as pages at the Palace. . . . with them was a boy of twelve or thirteen who particularly caught Genji's fancy" (TG 68; ML 39). Genji retains this boy in his service in order to get close to his sister, but when she proves to be elusive, Genji is not at all displeased to settle for the boy instead: "'So be it,' said Genji, 'but you at least must not abandon me,' and he laid the boy beside him on his bed. He was well content to find himself lying by this handsome young Prince's side, and Genji, we must record, found the boy no bad substitute for his ungracious sister" (TG 80; ML 46).

Later in the novel we observe Genji in public, dancing the 'Waves of the Blue Sea' with his friend Tô no Chûjô. Tô no Chûjô beside Genji "seemed like a mountain fir growing beside a cherry-tree in bloom." A "cherry-tree in bloom" is a well-known symbol of budding sexuality, though the image is decidedly feminine beside the rough mountain fir. The dancer and the dance are so "moving and beautiful" that "all the princes and great gentlemen wept aloud." Even the 'wicked step-mother' Kôkiden concedes bitterly, "he is altogether too beautiful" (TG 211; ML 129). Genji is of course idealized through Murasaki Shikibu's gaze, but he must have been an attractive figure for his translator as well, and many in Bloomsbury and among the 'children of the sun' would have found more charm in him than any of his ladies; Harold Acton, or Raymond Mortimer, for instance, the latter one of the Genji's biggest fans to whom Waley dedicated A Wreath of Cloud.<sup>71</sup> As Marian Ury wrote, "... the hero [Genji] is also

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<sup>71</sup> Noel Annan in Our Age (1990) discusses the "cult of homosexuality" that flourished in the literary world, and was promoted by Mortimer in the New Statesman: "The *New Statesman* was not exclusively homosexual but it certainly provided a haven in the literary pages under Raymond

a love object to Waley. It is Waley who invests him, as a lover invests the image of the beloved, with charm, with humor, with exuberant boyishness and with some portion of the appealing vulnerability that persists in his powerful middle age, and gives him an irresistible voice" ("Some Notes" 27). Although Genji's intrigues and affairs throughout the story are with women, his sexual appetite is excessive, his (hetero)sexuality exaggerated, like Wilde's characters in The Importance of Being Earnest. Marty Roth has pointed out that the strong assertion of manliness in cultural texts "is not to assert heterosexuality but to assert heterosexuality or homosexuality indeterminately" (275). Thus hyper-masculine characters in modern Western culture such as Don Juan or James Bond are, says Bosley Crowther, "what we're now calling homosexual sarcasm" (qtd. in Roth 276).<sup>72</sup>

Obviously, Murasaki would scarcely have comprehended any of these modern Western attitudes, and her Genji is as 'masculine' as any of the characters in her text would have wished him to be, but Waley was especially conscious of the culturally constructed binarisms of masculinity and femininity in contemporary England, and *his* Genji is about as effeminate as he or many among his audience would have wished him to be. Genji's interests are not in war, sports, hunting or horses--none of these 'manly' English games have any existence in the novel. He appears perfectly unconcerned with work, home, duty, responsibility and struggle, those "moral affirmations" of the Victorian-Edwardian frame of mind (M. Green 20). Genji is more the post-war aesthete-hero who aspires to poetry, dancing, music, and personal relations. Added to

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Mortimer . . ." (114). The phrase 'children of the sun' comes from the title of Martin Green's book, and refers to the generation born in England between 1900 and 1910.

<sup>72</sup> I am not suggesting, like Katherine Angell, that Genji is an "Eastern Don Juan." Takayuki Yokota-Murakami has devoted an entire book to denouncing this sort of facile identification: "For what is an 'Eastern Don Juan' other than a form of appropriation and subsumption?" (Don Juan East/West 109). Thus, we are not perturbed by the notion of an 'Eastern Don Juan' who 'loves,' but we would quickly dismiss the idea of Don Juan as a 'Western Genji,' master of iro-gonomi.

these are his 'oriental' (and therefore decadent in a Saidian sense) pursuits of penmanship (calligraphy) and perfume blending. Genji, in short, could not have existed in pre-war England; and he did not, as the reviews of Suematsu's Genji make clear. But in 1926 Waley could write, "many readers have agreed with me in feeling that such episodes as the death of Yûgao, the clash of the coaches at the Kamo festival, the visit of Genji to the mountains, the death of Aoi, become, after one reading, a permanent accession to the world as one knows it" (ST 32). Genji was clearly a post-war hero of English fiction brought to life by Waley.

We have already seen Waley in his Japanese Poetry and No Plays manipulating pronouns, "cross-writing" for specific homoerotic purposes (see pp. 89-90 and 139). Helen McCullough in her review of Seidensticker came across another instance of this in Waley's Genji, though she thought it was merely a "mistranslation" (94). The passage in question occurs in the chapter "Butterflies" in A Wreath of Cloud: "At Murasaki's request an offering of flowers was to be made to the presiding Buddha. They were bought by eight little boys disguised some as birds, some as butterflies. The Birds carried cherry-blossom in silver bowls; the Butterflies, mountain-kerria in golden bowls" (WC 224; ML 482). The same passage in Seidensticker reads as follows: "Murasaki had prepared the floral offerings. She chose eight of her prettiest little girls to deliver them, dressing four as birds and four as butterflies. The birds brought cherry blossoms in silver vases, the butterflies *yamabuki* in gold vases" (422). There is not a great deal of difference between the passages, except that "eight little boys" dressed as birds and butterflies would seem to have considerably more homoerotic appeal than eight pretty little girls.

Yet overt homoeroticism, as noted, is significantly less important in literary texts than tone or style. Waley's Tale of Genji is a novel imbued with the *style* of aestheticism and all that "aestheticism" implies. By that I refer not only to the

dictionary meaning of aestheticism as "a set of principles of good taste and the appreciation of beauty," but also to its Western historical position as a political philosophy or ideology deliberately constructed and set against other antagonistic ideologies (OED). The aesthetic sensibility is a strategy, both of resistance and of propaganda. It is hostile to bourgeois phallogentric capitalism which offers no space in the marketplace for anything that does not sell in quantity, namely art.<sup>73</sup>

Although aestheticism is not synonymous with homosexuality, its position on the margins of society struggling, as it were, to get in, render it an ideal locale for homosexuals equally on the margin: "Homosexuals have pinned their integration into society on promoting the aesthetic sense," Susan Sontag argued (290). Harold Beaver agrees: "queens are all accomplices in the art of fiction. Deprived of their own distinctive codes, homosexuals make art itself into their distinctive code" (106). And Marty Roth: "the displacement of homosexuality into art is not merely an item in a series but one of the original names of the game, as Walter Pater, Henry James, Marcel Proust, and Oscar Wilde declare" (271). The Tale of Genji, in its English translation by Waley, demonstrates equal aesthetic displacement, a celebration of beauty and the arts that *appear* to be loved and appreciated as worthy ends in themselves, transcending all other social and political concerns:

About the twentieth day of the second month the Emperor gave a Chinese banquet under the great cherry-tree of the Southern Court. . . . After some promise of rain the day turned out magnificent; and in full sunshine, with the birds singing in every tree, the guests (royal princes, noblemen and professional poets alike) were handed the rhyme words

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<sup>73</sup> I am only hinting here at the idea of aestheticism as a socialist, anti-capitalist position. The argument is long, and readers are referred to Gene Bell-Villada's extended treatment of the subject in Art for Art's Sake & Literary Life. London: U of Nebraska P, 1996. Bell-Villada's study is useful, but it fails to establish the critical connection between aestheticism and sexuality.

which the Emperor had drawn by lot, and set to work to compose their poems. It was with a clear and ringing voice that Genji read out the word 'Spring' which he had received as the rhyme-sound of his poem. . . . Towards dusk the delightful dance known as the Warbling of Spring Nightingales was performed, and when it was over the Heir Apparent, remembering the Festival of Red Leaves, placed a wreath on Genji's head and pressed him so urgently that it was impossible for him to refuse. Rising to his feet he danced very quietly a fragment of the sleeve-turning passage in the Wave Dance. In a few moments he was seated again, but even in this brief extract from a long dance he managed to import an unrivalled charm and grace. Even his father-in-law who was not in the best of humour with him was deeply moved and found himself wiping away a tear. (TG 239-40; ML 147)

So Genji the philandering, undutiful son-in-law is forgiven because of the beauty of his art (and his person). Aesthetics takes precedence over ethics. The adulation of Genji is also the celebration of the feminine man--feminine man as hero--with his special sensitivity to the beauty of art:

At Nijo-in there were whole cupboards full of pictures both old and new. . . . But it occurred to Genji that his own sketches made during his sojourn at Suma and Akashi might be of interest, and sending for the box in which they were kept he took advantage of this occasion to go through them with Murasaki. Even someone seeing them without any knowledge of the circumstances under which they were painted would, if possessed of the slightest understanding of such matters, have at once been profoundly moved by these drawings. (ST 266; ML 333)

Murasaki is profoundly moved, and so is Genji, who naturally responds with equally beautiful poetry. In Waley, Genji is the artiste par excellence, in person

and in practice. At the picture competition everyone is so deeply moved by "so masterly a hand working at complete leisure" that "they could scarcely refrain from tears" (ST 276; ML 339). Such deeply emotional response to art must have appeared to some contemporary English readers as strangely excessive, decadent, like Wilde bemoaning his inability to live up to his Blue China. Waley himself called it "rampant aestheticism . . . , the climax of an age-long decadence," but it was a decadence in which contemporary English readers indulged, an "intense aesthetic experience" modulated by Waley's style (Pillow Book 7). As Helen McCullough said, "the Waley *Genji* draws the reader into a magical world where aestheticism governs thought and conduct, where sensitivity to the moods of nature informs and enriches human existence" ("Seidensticker" 97). It was a magical escape from the corpse-strewn fields of post-war Europe and the nightmare of European history engendered by Western patriarchs.

But Waley's stress upon the aesthetic quality of Heian civilization needs some correction. As he wrote in his introduction to Sei Shônagon's Pillow Book (1928), the Heian period was "purely aesthetic" (8). Art was for art's sake, and even towards religion these ancient aesthetes took a "purely aesthetic approach," somewhat as Wilde took towards the 'beautiful' rituals of Catholicism: "Buddhism," says Waley, "(with its rosaries, baptism, tonsured monks, and nuns; its Heaven, Purgatory, and Hell) appears to have many points of resemblance to Catholic Christianity" (11). With this in mind, Waley translated Buddhist rituals in the Genji using Catholic terminology, and he emphasized throughout the Tale the "exquisiteness," the "pleasantness and beauty" of those rituals rather than their austerity, as we saw above.

Similarly, the portrayal of Genji as artist and art connoisseur was perhaps too readily interpreted as Aestheticism or Decadence as it is known in the West, with little understanding of the many functions of art in Heian society and in the



Genji. As Joshua Mostow writes, "pictures fulfill a variety of functions in the Tale" ("Picturing" 2). Genji, for instance, uses pictures not merely to teach but to manipulate and control his female 'victims' like Murasaki and Tamakatsura. They see in the 'inferior' illustrated romances with which they are provided only what they are permitted to see--access to Chinese letters is denied them. Pictures are also symbolic of "imperial authority and political power" ("Picturing" 23). Genji's victory at the picture competition is a triumph of the artist as politician, for with his vivid, controlling images of Suma and Akashi (which presumably no other member at court has seen and cannot therefore imagine except through Genji's controlling gaze) he defeats the very political faction--Kôkiden's Right--that had earlier forced him into exile. In Waley's Genji, there is a recognition of political victory, but a much stronger emphasis is placed on "pleasure" and "exquisite" beauty. Here is Genji immediately after the picture competition:

Genji had a strong presentiment the Court ceremony and festivals of the reign were destined to be taken as a model in future times. It was for this reason that even in the matter of private pastimes and receptions he took great pains that everything should be carried out in the most perfectly appropriate and pleasurable manner. Hence life at Court during this period became one long series of exquisitely adjusted pomps and festivities. (ST 280; ML 342)

"Exquisitely adjusted" according to Genji's political will.

Yet, as Waley himself admitted, "the life of the Heian Court in the tenth century is known to us chiefly through two documents, *The Tale of Genji* . . . and *The Pillow Book* by Sei Shônagon" (13). Sei's Pillow Book may well serve as a valuable corrective to Murasaki's Genji, as George Sansom suggested, but even the two texts together do not form a balanced or well-rounded view of Heian

society (History to 1334, 196). One can only imagine how some remote people in the year 3000 would sum up the early modern period in Britain with only, say, Ulysses and the diaries of Virginia Woolf. Likewise, Waley also appears to have been making broad generalizations based solely on these two 'feminine' texts, and his example was followed to some extent by Ivan Morris in The World of the Shining Prince (1964).

A more recent study of the Heian period, Francine Hérail's La Cour du Japon à l'époque de Heian (1995), has given us another view of that civilization based on her reading of the kambun (Chinese writing) diaries of Fujiwara (male) dignitaries. Hérail explains that patronage of the arts in the Heian period was no art for art's sake aestheticism in the European sense, but an intrinsic part of the rites and ceremonies of government. In other words, art was for the sake of politics, as we saw in chapter one: "Le Japon ancien a pris à la Chine l'idée que la poésie est le sommet de toute littérature, que le rite est, par excellence, un moyen de gouverner et que la danse et la musique contribuent au succès d'un règne" (73). Thus, the patronage and performance of art at the Heian court is almost synonymous with the business of government. Art existed not for its own sake but to exhibit the beauty and grandeur of the state, and to ensure the state's stability and continuity.

Waley's translation of the Tale of Genji was at once a translation and also a metaphor of England's own 'temps perdu,' the endless summer or belle époque of the late-Edwardian period before the war broke out and ended it, leaving a generation lost, disillusioned, and forever looking back with nostalgia at a Golden Age of youth, innocence, and beauty (and sexual experimentation); an age when poetry was central to thought and life, as it had been for Waley and his friends at Cambridge. As Marian Ury wrote, "the language [Waley] speaks [in The

Tale of Genji] is very much that of Cambridge undergraduates ca. 1911" ("Imaginary" 279). At the same time, Waley's Genji was a challenge to the narrow moral restrictions of that society, offering a vision of alternative sexualities and sexual practices as a natural part of a sophisticated and civilized culture. The passéiste perspective of Waley's Genji, to borrow a term from Bell-Villada, was typically modernist, and we find it manifest in the thoughts and poetry of Yeats, Eliot, and Pound, who all in various ways constructed their own Golden Ages in which art occupied a position of primary importance. As Waley's close friend Harold Acton wrote in his Memoirs of an Aesthete (1948), "we had a culture which war has interrupted" (1). Acton suggested that this culture can be recovered, and he and his generation certainly tried, though of course the Golden Age has always already gone. Still, it can perhaps be experienced vicariously through the imagination or through imaginative literature like The Tale of Genji.

## CHAPTER SIX

### Conclusion

It is wrong to be sad,  
 To see the death of an Empire as tragedy, the ruins in rows  
 As a hideous disaster, and the enemy for whom are used  
 So many playful names, as pitiless foes.

(Arthur Waley, "Et pourtant c'est triste quand meurent les empires")

The 1920s were peaceful and stable in Europe, at least in relation to what had passed and what was to come. The war was over, the stock market was booming, and various cultural movements that were later to be called collectively, Modernism, were thriving. For some the post-war mood was sombre and the soul had admitted, said Leonard Woolf, "an iron acquiescence in insecurity and barbarism," but there was considerable hope placed in the pacifying powers of the newly created League of Nations, in which Woolf and G. Lowes Dickinson, among others, had played such active roles to bring about (Downhill 9). For younger artists and intellectuals, the '20s were "in the grip of the pleasure principle," said Martin Green (201). Aestheticism reigned in a nervously energetic decade full of fun, experiment, and wild parties. Meanwhile, Bloomsbury members emerged as leaders not only in politics and culture but also in "manners and morals," in the words of Noel Annan: "They wanted to live their lives regardless of the conventions of class, family and of national myths," Annan writes, and as "liberators . . . they were the most influential gurus of Our Age" (77-8). Arthur Waley personally challenged all of these conventions by rejecting any social or religious claims of the Anglo-Jewish cousinhood and living an unorthodox, bohemian life among scholars and artists in Bloomsbury. Through his translations from Asian literature he also

attempted to undermine the 'national myth' of European cultural superiority that had prevailed for centuries and had authorized the colonization of the non-European world.

Waley's translations from the Japanese were really works of the '20s, even if the final volume of The Tale of Genji did not appear until 1933, for the immediate post-war image of Japan was generally positive and the climate favourable to the reception of Japanese culture. These translations together with his translations from the Chinese had immense appeal in the West; they also had considerable influence on younger generations, such as the group known as the Oxford Wits, or Children of the Sun, as Martin Green called them, which included several of Waley's strongest supporters in Cyril Connolly, Kenneth Clark, Peter Quennell, Harold Acton and Anthony Powell, several of whom became personal friends and all of whom praised Waley highly in their writings. Acton, for instance, recorded in his Memoirs that "it was not until I read Arthur Waley's translations of *The Tale of Genji* and the Nô plays that I thought of Japan with any enthusiasm" (255). In Quennell's case, an enthusiasm for Japan that was at least in part due to Waley was translated into a year of teaching English literature at Tokyo university (1930-31). Enthusiasm for an aestheticized Japan, however, was about to end.

Almost as soon as the Genji began to appear, the short-lived atmosphere of peace and pleasure in Britain began to change. The General Strike of 1926 was followed by the stock market crash of 1929 with ensuing widespread unemployment in Britain and North America. 1930 saw the emergence of Mohandas Gandhi in India but also the Nazi party in Germany. Then, on 18 September 1931, Japan invaded Manchuria. The Chinese government appealed to the League of Nations Council to "take appropriate action immediately and effectively in accordance with the provisions of the Covenant with a view to

causing withdrawal of the Japanese troops from the occupied areas and thus preserving the peace of the Far East" (qtd. in E. Green 1007). The League took no definite action, merely advising both sides to settle the matter between them and appealing to Japan to withdraw troops, advice which Japan simply ignored. Two years later Japan occupied North China and left the League of Nations. In 1936 China declared war on Japan, and in the following year Japan captured Peking, Shanghai, and Nanking. Another Sino-Japanese war had begun, and the image of Japan as supreme aesthetic nation faded away.

The Japanese invasion of Manchuria was the first test of the League's power. When Lowes Dickinson saw that no action would be taken against Japan he is reported to have exclaimed, "Then it's all up with us" (qtd. in Annan 188). The New Statesman and Nation followed events closely and loudly condemned Japanese aggression; one of the earliest responses appeared here in October 1931 in the form of a sarcastic poem by "MacFlecknoe":

Manchuria?----Pouf! a hot election  
Gives little leisure for reflection  
On broils and squabbles in the East.  
Yet in Geneva's name, at least,  
I bid you for one moment note  
Japan----her hands at China's throat----  
Resentful even of the mention  
Of international "intervention" ;  
Yet ready, so her statesmen say,  
For peace and honour, by the way  
Of plain "direct negotiation"  
With the offending (weaker) nation. . . .  
Yet if the Courts should think it rude,  
When thus appealed to, to intrude,  
And, solacing their wounded pride  
With muttered protests, step aside  
Inactive----would they be exempt

From bringing law into contempt ?  
 I throw it out as a suggestion,  
 The League should ask itself that question.

So far from intervening on China's behalf, Britain was more concerned with its own commercial interests in China and with rearmament in Germany. Thus the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Neville Chamberlain, began making quiet overtures towards Japan between 1933 and 1936 with a view to improving Anglo-Japanese relations which had deteriorated since the end of the Alliance in 1921 (see Bennett). In the Far East, British foreign policy meant imperialism as usual, whatever the supporters of the League might say.

The outcry in Britain against Japanese aggression in China would likely have been louder had there not been so much else happening in Europe. A fascist regime had been established in Portugal in 1932; Hitler became German Chancellor in 1933; Italy under Mussolini invaded Abyssinia (Ethiopia) in 1935, and then formed an axis with Germany in 1936; in the same year the Spanish Civil War began, with Franco and his fascists attempting to displace the democratically-elected government. Fascism was even developing in England, as Oswald Mosley established the British Union of Fascists in 1932. Amidst all of this was the Great Depression, and the angry voices of many blaming it all on the Jews. Indeed, the war between Japan and China was seen as merely the eastern theatre of a world war taking place, and to come, between fascism and socialism.

It was in this climate of fear and foreboding that the final volume of the Genji, The Bridge of Dreams, appeared. Already in Europe, literature was becoming increasingly concerned with political issues that reflected the pain of poverty and the menacing rise of militarism. If the twenties were, as Rose Macaulay wrote, "a good decade: gay, decorative, intelligent, extravagant, cultured[,] . . . the next decade was more serious, less cultured, less esthetic, more

political" (qtd. in Forster 273). The pressing need for literature to address 'serious' issues in the here and now was reflected in Orlo Williams' review of The Bridge of Dreams in the Criterion. Williams acknowledged that Waley's translation was "a remarkable achievement . . . for the sustained elegance of its style and the subtlety of its diction," but questioned whether a work of literature can be a "masterpiece" without concerning itself with a wider range of human experience:

. . . what, after all, are the issues and values illustrated in this life of a fabulous, paragon prince, whose every appearance and performance were so perfect as to draw tears from the eyes of the beholders? The issues are solely those of sentiment; the values only those of a pure aesthetic. . . . There are no politics in our sense, no wars, no strivings for any but formal ideals, no conflicts but in a palace intrigue for power or in a *tête-à-tête* for amorous victory. . . . Nearly all the conceptions that we hold adequate to man's higher nature are absent. (281-3)

The idea that literature must be engaged with 'politics,' 'wars,' 'strivings for ideals' merely reflected contemporary literary trends; still, many readers continued to appreciate the apparent absence of these elements from the Tale: seventh and eighth impressions were released in 1934 and 1935, and in 1935 a two-volume collected edition of 7000 copies appeared. Waley's translation was also translated into Swedish, French, Dutch and Italian between 1927 and 1935.

The avant-garde movement away from aestheticism towards a literature that was more overtly political continued, however, and it is illustrated in the new poetry of what Samuel Hynes called "the Auden Generation." In 1939 W. H. Auden and Christopher Isherwood published their Journey to a War, a literary travel book that was a direct response to the Sino-Japanese War. China "had become one of the world's decisive battlegrounds," Isherwood wrote in his



memoir (Christopher 289), and they both felt strongly that it was necessary to become directly involved in the world of concrete people, to avoid assuming what Edward Said refers to as a "textual attitude" towards reality, where the fallacious assumption is made that "the swarming unpredictable, and problematic mess in which human beings live can be understood on the basis of what books--texts--say" (93). Journey to a War acknowledges the exotic, aesthetic attraction of the Far East generated by European literature but finds none of it there. From their first sight of Hong Kong, which Auden and Isherwood both found "hideous," that special "something purely and romantically Oriental" eluded them, Isherwood recorded (Christopher 300). Japan was now "an enemy country," and the Japanese had chosen the part of the latter in the timeless battle between Good and Evil (Christopher 310). Auden's sonnet sequence in Journey to a War is long and complicated and can only be mentioned here. Where China is concerned, one positive effect of the Sino-Japanese War is that it has united communists with capitalists: "Here danger works a civil reconciliation, / Interior hatreds are resolved upon this foreign foe." Auden's side in the war was clear: "[the Chinese] must turn and gather like a fist to strike / Wrong coming from the sea," but he is more accusatory of Japan's ruler, the "estranging tyrant," than he is of the Japanese people, who merely follow their leaders "in a calm stupor" (Journey 290). Journey to a War might be remembered today for Auden's famous line that became the title of a book by the Japanese Nobel Prize winner Kenzaburô Ôe: "O teach me to outgrow my madness . . ." (Journey 300).

There were other literary responses to the Sino-Japanese War. William Plomer, who lived and taught in Japan for two years and wrote many poems and two books inspired by his Japanese experience (Paper Houses [1929], Sado [1931]), published a poem in Listener in 1938 entitled "The Japanese Invasion of China."

In this uncollected poem the aesthetic appeal of Japan is contrasted with the horrible present moment:

Warm wine in a little cup,  
A red leaf, a white sleeve fluttered,  
Morning smoke was wafted up,  
More, more was felt than uttered.

Why, then, why the rape of a child,  
The lidless eyes, the screaming man,  
The ricefield village all defiled  
To a cold, elaborate, zestful plan?

Plomer later answered his own rhetorical question in his autobiography: "the Japanese, long ago perceiving Western sentimentality about them, did their best, right up to 1941, to exploit it for the purposes of propaganda, and behind a barrage of cherry blossoms they gradually built up their heavy industries for their great design of conquering the world" (203). This is rather unfair, as Westerners like Plomer had consciously constructed an image of a delicate, effeminate Japan, choosing to see those cherry blossoms and deliberately overlooking the less pleasant military-industrial 'masculine' realities. Somehow Japan had been remarkably 'civilized' after beating the Russians in 1904-5.

Disappointment was surely most profound in those like Plomer who had been thoroughly enraptured with an aestheticized Japan of their own fantasy. So Laurence Binyon, another Japanophile, was deeply depressed by the Japanese invasion of China, according to his biographer. He wrote to Yukio Yashiro (also Waley's friend) in 1940: "Some of our Japanese friends assure us that the only way in which Japan can show her friendship to China & veneration for Chinese culture is to make war on her and reduce her to vassalage. I cannot understand this attitude" (qtd. in Hatcher 279). Japanese activities in China are hardly

excusable, but where was the opposition to the British presence there, reducing the Chinese to vassalage? Yashiro's reply to Binyon is unrecorded.

Perhaps the most violent rejection of Japan came from Harold Acton whose earlier enthusiasm, we have seen, had been directly brought about by Waley's Nô Plays and The Tale of Genji. Travelling in the Far East in the 1930s, Acton stated frankly, "while there was a Japanese army threatening China I had no desire to see more of Japan than the monuments of her more cultured past. Her present disgusted me." This disdain was carried to a height of vitriol unequalled by other observers, as all Japanese literature since the Genji, declared Acton, "did not transcend the barely-veiled cunning of the savage. . . . In spite of their coatings of Chinese lacquer and Western veneer, one concluded that the Japs were a primitive type of humanity" (255-6). So much for the aesthetic propaganda. Acton manages to reproduce a familiar orientalist trope of oriental cunning and savagery while at the same time chivalrously rescuing the Tale of Genji, *our Genji*, from it.

These poems and comments were made by writers who knew Waley personally. What was the response from the translator himself, whose works had done so much to encourage popular interest in both Japan and China? Waley responded initially with his ultimate weapon: silence. After fulfilling his obligation to complete the translation of the Genji, he translated no literature from the Japanese for sixteen years, and even then very little for the rest of his life. Yet this period (1933-1949) was enormously productive, and in it he published a plethora of translations from the Chinese.<sup>74</sup> A proposed seventh volume to the six-volume Tale of Genji, in which he had intended to translate

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<sup>74</sup> Waley's Chinese translations in this period (not including articles) included The Way and its Power (1934), The Book of Songs (1937), The Analects of Confucius (1938), Three Ways of Thought in Ancient China (1939), Monkey (1942), The Life and Times of Po Chü-i (1949), and The Poetry and Career of Li Po (1950).

Murasaki Shikibu's diary and to "give some particulars about the age in which she lived," did not appear (qtd. in Johns, Bibliography 34).

Waley did translate some literature of the Ainu, an indigenous people of Japan who were brutally suppressed and almost exterminated by the Japanese. The "Ainu Song" (1939) tells of an Ainu brother and sister who have left or fled their home, and who now live "on the western borders / Of another land" (Japan) starving and mourning for their lost village (Secret History 209-10). There was also one article, "The Japanese Spirit" (1943) that was referred to in chapter three (pp. 101-2), though which perhaps deserves another comment here in this context. "The Japanese Spirit" was a scathing attack on the contemporary Japanese use of the term Yamatodamashii, which had come to mean simply "'morale' in the military sense": "Japanese, conscious that they cannot hope to compete with Allied material war-production, are told by their leaders that they need not despair, for that unique quality, *Yamato-damashii*, will pull them through." A much earlier use of the term had appeared in The Tale of Genji, where there was not "the slightest suggestion that 'the Japanese spirit' has any connection with military virtues":

uncouth frontier war-lords displaced the exquisitely cultivated Court of the *Genji* period, [and] an ideal of ruthlessness succeeded the cult of sensibility. But the uncultivated conquerors took over, in a rather unconvinced way, some of the aestheticism of their predecessors. They felt it incumbent upon them, even in the midst of their smash-and-grab campaigns, to make poems about flowers and moonlight. This rather mechanical pre-occupation with pretty things has remained with the Japanese, partly as mere convention, partly as genuine legacy from the astonishing civilization of the *Genji* period. (147)

It is obvious that Waley shared with his friends a deep disappointment in Japan, what is less obvious is an awareness of how his books had been a part of the 'aesthetic propaganda.' It is also interesting and amusing to observe how it is now *the Japanese* who are mechanically preoccupied with pretty things, while Westerners, who had only been absorbed in Japanese 'prettiness' for about a century, are absolved of any complicity.

In 1929 Waley had published an article entitled, "The Originality of Japanese Civilization." Not a particularly important article, it attempted to correct the popular Western myth or misconception "that Japanese civilization is purely derivative"; Yeats's poem "Imitated from the Japanese" had had a similar aim (see pp. 89-90). This Waley did by showing how classical Japanese literature--poetry, No plays, and The Tale of Genji--owed less to Chinese influence than even some Japanese critics supposed. Nothing disparaging was said about the "immense influence of China on Japan," it was merely a statement that the literatures of the two countries were really quite different (767). On 16 April 1940, however, Yukio Yashiro wrote to Waley asking for a contribution "to commemorate the 2,600th anniversary of the foundation of the Japanese empire" (Johns, Bibliography 42). The result was the reprinting of Waley's "Originality of Japanese Civilization" by the Kokusai Bunka Shinkôkai (Society for the Promotion of International Cultural Relations). From what we have seen in chapter three of contemporary pro-Japanese/anti-Chinese rhetoric, it is immediately apparent that Waley's article could have been interpreted in 1941 in a pro-Japanese imperialist context; indeed, the reprinted article gave no indication that it had appeared before, suggesting that Waley was only too pleased to participate in the 'pure Japanese' language and literature project. It is certainly surprising that Waley had allowed his article to be reprinted at all, but if

there is any mistake that Waley in 1941 had taken a pro-Japanese position, we need only observe his activities during the Second War.

"Well before the Munich Crisis of 1938," Margaret Waley recorded, Arthur had asked his older brother Sigi (a civil servant) to get him a job in some capacity when the war should come (21).<sup>75</sup> Waley was appointed a censor in the Japanese section of the Ministry of Information where he worked for six years. One of the few original poems that he wrote concerned this activity; it was dedicated to the Chinese poet Hsiao Ch'ien and published in 1940 in Horizon with the title, "Censorship (in Chinese Style)":

I have been a censor for fifteen months,  
 The building where I work has four times been bombed.  
 Glass, boards and paper, each in turn,  
 Have been blasted from the windows--where windows are left at all.  
 It is not easy to wash, keep warm and eat;  
 At times we lack gas, water or light.  
 The rules for censors are difficult to keep;  
 In six months there were over a thousand 'stops'.  
 The Air Raid Bible alters from day to day;  
 Official orders are not clearly expressed.  
 One may mention Harrods, but not Derry and Toms;  
 One may write of mist but may not write of rain.  
 Japanese scribbled on thin paper  
 In faint scrawl tires the eyes to read.  
 In a small room with ten telephones  
 And a tape-machine concentration is hard.  
 Yet the Blue Pencil is a mere toy to wield,  
 There are worse knots than the tangles of Red Tape.  
 It is not difficult to censor foreign news,  
 What is hard today is to censor one's own thoughts--

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<sup>75</sup> Yukio Yashiro said that Waley had been "conscripted" by the Ministry of Information, but Margaret Waley is very clear on this point, adding that since Waley was "already fifty . . . he could have carried on with his own work undisturbed but his feelings were too strong to permit this" (Yashiro 17; M. Waley 21-2).

To sit by and see the blind man  
On the sightless horse, riding into the bottomless abyss.

It is interesting to observe here Waley's dislike of control, particularly the rules about words that he can or cannot use. Nor is there anything aesthetic about this "Japanese scribbled on thin paper / in faint scrawl . . ."; it only "tires the eyes." After the experience of translating the Genji Monogatari into 600,000 words of carefully wrought and elegant English, life as a censor was a rude awakening.

While engaged in his duties as censor he also prepared political pamphlets for propaganda purposes. One that was called "Worse than People Think" was intended to demonstrate to people all over Asia "that it would not be agreeable to be part of the Japanese Co-Prosperity Sphere." The manuscript of this pamphlet, which is in the Waley-de Zoete collection at Rutgers, contains graphic details of Japanese beating, raping and torturing of innocent civilians in Korea and China. Waley understood that his pamphlet was "written on the principle that propaganda shall inflame rather than merely inform," but it must have been quite disturbing or desensitizing for him to write in this way after the intense aesthetic experience of the Genji. Nor did he invent the gruesome events he described, as history shows only too clearly. We can well understand that Waley renounced Japanese literature for political and moral reasons. It also seems clear that the enormous output of Chinese translations in the '30s and '40s was due in part to a "conscientious identification with victims" of Japanese atrocities, for his sixteen-page pamphlet ends with a description of the Japanese as "the Nazis of the East," and with the statement, "PEOPLES OF ASIA, UNITE AGAINST JAPAN!"

By 1945, the "Nazis of the East" had been sufficiently crushed into history. In fact, it was not long before the pre-war aesthetic image of Japan, so irresistibly alluring, was resurrected by a new generation of mainly American discoverers of

exotic, erotic Japan. As Ian Littlewood has written, "after the eclipse of the 1940s, the aesthetic fairyland was back in favour" (70). This is most evident in the post-war popular writing of Pearl S. Buck (The Hidden Flower [1952]), Vern Sneider (The Tea-House of the August Moon [1952]), James Michener (Sayonara [1953]), Ian Fleming (You Only Live Twice [1964]), just to mention a few well-known post-war japoniste texts. There was also a new age for Japanese Studies, now centred in the United States where the power had shifted and which, as suggested at the beginning of chapter three by Earl Miner, might be said to 'begin' with Donald Keene's Anthology of Japanese Literature (1955). But this is another story.

Waley's first post-war translation from the Japanese (1949) was a short "scenario" of two pages called "San Sebastian," a translation of "Yûwaku" ("Temptation") by Ryûnosuke Akutagawa (1892-1927) that was published in Akutagawa's posthumous volume Konan no Ôgi (1928; Akutagawa committed suicide in 1927). This, to my knowledge, was also the first translation by Waley from modern Japanese literature; experience as a censor during the war had no doubt considerably improved his proficiency in modern Japanese. He also translated an autobiographical fragment by Akutagawa called "Myself" ("Boku Wa" 1926), though it was not published until 1970 when Alison Waley provided Ivan Morris with a copy for his Madly Singing in the Mountains.

Alison Waley also gave Morris copies of previously unpublished translations of nineteen Japanese poems, classical and modern, which first appeared in Morris' anthology. I will cite this modern tanka by Yûgure Maeda (1883-1951):<sup>76</sup>

By the samisen's sound  
Alone they live

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<sup>76</sup> Yûgure Maeda is discussed briefly by Donald Keene in his Dawn to the West (1984): 35-38.



At night, these ancient

Streets of the river mouth

Down which I lose my way (qtd. in Morris, ed. Madly 239)

We notice at once that Waley has made an attempt to reproduce a Japanese poem as English poetry, without setting a tentative translation beside the original Japanese version as he had done in his Japanese Poetry. It is not clear, however, when the poem was translated or whether this was Waley's final version, or indeed that he would have wanted these poems published at all. Yet it is important to note that he appears to have begun paying attention to modern Japanese literature, and cannot be accused of simply shunning modern Japan in favour of some "visionary image" of the Heian period, as Peter Quennell suggested (Marble Foot 156).

Another poem of the series "Nineteen Japanese Poems" in Morris is one of a group of twelve poems in a manuscript at Rutgers entitled "Japanese Revolutionary Poems, 1860-1868." Since I hope to deal with these poems in detail elsewhere, I will cite only two of them in passing here. Number 13 in Morris (239), by Masa Murai (c. 1865), is identical to number 10 in Waley's manuscript, though Waley had inserted no period after "dusk," and he had given the poem a title, "In Prison":

With buried face I sit in the yellow dusk[.]

The prison slaves have not yet lit the lamp.

Gusts of cold wind gnaw my bones;

The clothes on my back are frozen stiff as ice.

In spite of the bleak atmosphere, this is refreshingly modern, a far cry from the traditional and well-worn themes of flowers, birds and moonlight. The choice of the poem also shows once again Waley's sympathy for a subject who is presumably a victim of some injustice.



Europeans, but the allusion also hints at the inefficacy or impotence of the Tokugawa government which does not resist the Europeans. But now we have come almost full circle, for we are back in the nineteenth century where this study began.

Arthur Waley came of age as an orientalist at a time when European powers were competing for hegemony in the Far East. Japan and Japanese culture were admired for a variety of reasons, partly romantic and escapist, but also partly practical and political: Japan was a strategic ally, and was seen as an 'England of the East,' a model civilization that showed the way to a renewal of the 'spirit' of the British Empire. Japan as model civilization was equally *useful* to 'right-wing' imperialists such as Lord Curzon, and also to 'left-wing' socialist groups like the Fabian Society, with which Waley was affiliated. Even anti-imperialists, as we saw in chapter one, lauded Japan as a potential leader of non-European nations against European imperialism. Whatever the perspective, Japan has always been a catalyst for Western confrontations with itself. Individuals, societies and nations in the last hundred and fifty years have found in Japan what they have wanted to find, and what they needed, ignoring that which they have chosen not to see. I believe this is especially true (until the 1930s) of Waley, who found in Japanese No plays and the Genji Monogatari an aesthetic outlet for a suppressed and inhibited sexuality, as well as cultural models to set in the scales against European culture. The Tale of Genji also enabled Waley to realize a personal ambition to write stories, and he produced a unique English novel with an unforgettable hero that remains not only the most important modernist interpretation of Japanese culture between the two great wars, but a remarkable record of Edwardian-Bloomsbury language and aesthetic sensibility.

Yet, as suggested in chapter two, Waley's position in relation to Japan was always ambiguous: he was one of the first Western orientalists to attack the pretty, and pretty condescending, image of Japan as "a large painted and lacquered tea-tray," but at the same time he was part of an early academic movement which legitimized or institutionalized that image; put another way, he always treated his subject soberly and seriously, but he still bought into and sanctioned the one-sided 'feminine' or aesthetic view of Japan. With his translation of The Tale of Genji he challenged contemporary European notions of cultural supremacy as part of a campaign against imperialism, but he also participated--even if unwillingly--in the great imperial project of knowledge about the East, making available with his Japanese Poetry, for instance, the classical Japanese language at a time when knowledge of oriental languages was seen as an urgent imperial requirement. From a Western perspective, the 'discovery' of the important drama critic Zeami or of the fascinating Japanese Heian period were major archaeological unearthings, and the archaeologist himself was right there to decipher the exotic ancient ruins.

Waley never visited the Far East, in spite of many invitations. He maintained a profoundly 'textual attitude' towards his subject, discovering it and defining it in and from texts that he 'found' in the British Museum. This was not exactly a dismissal or denial of Asian modernity so much as it was a typically modernist fascination with the past, with the other, with an alternative to the decay that was thought to be manifest in European culture. The interesting irony of Waley's position is that it was British imperialism in the Far East, British involvement with *modern* Asia, that led him to the orient, and yet what he found there was mainly an ancient civilization that existed for the most part in his museum, and in his books.

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